NO FICTION.

NO FICTION:

Narrative,

FOUNDED ON

RECENT AND INTERESTING FACTS.

'Le vrai n'est pas toujours vraisemblable.'

'These familiar histories may, perhaps, be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions.' DR. JOHNSON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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1819.



NO FICTION.

A NARRATIVE FOUNDED ON FACTS.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHILE Lefevre was thus drinking the sour draughts of regret and disappointment, which the world ever imposes on such, as are credulous enough to listen to her flattering speeches, he received the following letter from his deserted, but steady friend Douglas.

Mr. Douglas to Mr. Lefévre.

'MY DEAR CHARLES,

'It is now six months since I have seen or heard from you; and it is three times that period, since you have informed me of any thing belonging to your affairs!

Who would have thought it!—Would not you—should not I—six years ago have pronounced such an event in the history of our friendship impossible? But it has occurred! If you chose to avoid personal intercourse, was it not due to a friend, who has so much interest in your welfare, to give him some account of your situation. But I forbear—This is my consolation, if our friendship is at an end, *I* have not been accessary to its dissolution.

'I assure you I have need of this consolation. No loss in life appears to me worthy of comparison with the loss of friendship—And I have lost a friend! The companion of my youth, the sharer and heightener of my joys, has left me; he who nobly strove to outstep me in climbing the elevations of christian knowledge, and in exemplifying the devotedness of the christian character, has halted in the race. O Charles! what pleasures have been ours. What sympathy of sentiment—what a mixture of souls!—what serene peace—what heavenly raptures! They are gone—they are gone! They live only in re-

Mr. Douglas to Mr. Lefevre.

Bristol,

'Although, my very dear Charles, a reply to your's may not be expected, I cannot suffer a day to pass away without writing you. You are miserable, and can I be indifferent—can I forego an attempt to comfort you. "Let my right hand forget its cunning" rather than refuse to lighten the sorrows of a friend! Fain would I say something to revive hope, and expel despondency!

'And are you so miserable as you describe yourself? Have you found the world to be simply vexatious and deceitful? Have you relied on her promises, and does she scoff at you for doing so? In the very paths of pleasure have remorse and disappointment, stung you like an adder, and bit you like a serpent? Are you, at once, deprived of hope in both worlds? And do you, deliberately, utter your own condemnation? O, Charles! what shall I say?—My very heart bleeds for you!

'Despair seems to have fastened itself upon you. But you must not yield to it—indeed you *must* not. It is death to entertain it!—it shuts up the soul in impenitence and unbelief. I have long seen and deplored a tendency to this state of mind. I would not willingly add a particle to a weight already insupportable to you, but excuse me if I ask, May not this despair arise from the sullenness of mortified pride, rather than from *real humility?* May it not have been successfully employed already by your great enemy, in withholding you from religion? If he can once bring us to think, that there is no hope for us in God—in his salvation—or in the use of the means of grace, he will find nothing more necessary to induce us to abandon them. And never, *till we resolve on their abandonment*, does our situation properly assume a *hopeless* aspect. It is not the strength and virulence of our disease, but the *rejection of the antidote*, that renders our case desperate.

'Think not then of forsaking the only remedy that can promise you relief. Deep

as is your fall, despair not of redemption. Despair of the world—despair of yourself—but do not despair of religion. There is nothing it cannot effect on the heart placed beneath its influence! It can subdue the most powerful corruptions—it can regulate the most violent passions—it can sanctify the most polluted soul. It affords the fullest encouragement to the *very chief of sinners.* The gospel assures us that God is "ready to forgive," and unwilling to punish; that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses FROM ALL SIN; and it extends its invitation, without exception, to the rebellious, the guilty, the ungodly, the backsliding.

'Oh! Charles, the Father you have forsaken, is still waiting to receive you—the fountain you have despised, is still open to cleanse you—the Saviour, whose voice you have long lost in the din of carnal dissipation, still addresses you, and says, "Come unto me, thou that art weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Ah! is not your heart touched by such amazing forbearance and grace?—Will you

not, like the recreant prodigal, return unto the God of your mercies? O, return, return, to the God from whom you have so deeply revolted! Return, return, to the pleasures you have so unwisely sacrificed to vanity! Your race is not yet run!—your sun is not yet set! The day of grace is not yet past! Your peace, your character may yet be recovered. The gates of mercy are *never* closed against the returning penitent.—You have *nothing to fear*, but *impenitence* and *despair*. Remember, it is only those who *continue* in iniquity, that shall be cut off; that those only perish, who *choose* death, rather than life; if they die, it is because *they cast away life*—they die as *suicides!*

'How greatly am I concerned to find you, in your present state, resolving to "forsake at once the world and religion, and to seek in retirement that peace neither of them can afford you." This is not the language of reason and sobriety, but of intemperate and desperate feeling. Be assured we never really forsake the world, till we really embrace religion, and, while our hearts are alienated from the life of

God, we are under the spirit of the world, whether we are gay or sorrowful—whether we seek the haunts of dissipation, or retire from them disgusted,

'And can you for a moment think, that it is in the power of mere retirement to comfort you? Can retirement be pleasing, with *remorse* and *despair* for her attendants? Is it not because you have already found your own society insupportable to yourself, that you have fled from solitude to a crowd of ensnaring companions? And do you now look to it as to a sovereign remedy? O you forget, that when it was delightful to you, it was made so by christian friendship, by the light of the Divine countenance, and by the unaccusing testimony of a good conscience. Without these, retirement will only add poignancy to your sorrows, and blackness to your despair.

'Think not that I oppose retirement in general terms. I oppose it merely in the light in which you contemplate it. Retire, by all means retire, from a world which has made you too miserable! But,

retire, to call upon God—retire, to seek the application of the balm of Gilead to your wounded mind—retire, to re-enter the paths you have so long deserted. Nothing less than this, rely upon it, can reconcile you to yourself, or make retirement a blessing to you.

'Oh! my dear Charles, this is a serious crisis to you. You seem to stand on a precipice, and the next step may either recover you to virtue, or fix you in despair! Pray before you think, and think before you resolve. Spared as you are till now—convinced as you must be of the folly and criminality of your course—and solicited as you are by the voice of friendship and religion—ought you not to flee to the only hope that remains to you? Such a period may never occur again. O, by our former friendship—by your present distress—by the possibility of your return to happiness—and by the mercies of God—I earnestly beseech you do not slight it—do not abuse it to a *useless* melancholy!

'Painful as are your feelings, I rejoice that you have been disposed to communi-

cate them. Still tell me all you think and fear. Be assured, that the utterance of your most uneasy sentiments cannot give me so much pain, as their concealment. My confidence and sympathy are what you once knew them to be. Trust them as they deserve.

'May God Almighty visit you, and save you! May you be restored to the pleasures you have lost, and raised to such as you have not yet participated! Religion can do this.

'Your's most affectionately,

'JAMES DOUGLAS.'

This correspondence did not produce the effects that might have been hoped. Lefevre did not embrace Douglas's kind invitations to a renewed and candid intercourse. He had replied so freely to Douglas's first letter, rather to *justify* himself, than to confess his faults, as he feared Douglas might have been tempted to think him even worse than he was. Douglas gave him credit for a better motive, and was in the issue disappointed.

Nor were the references made to his spiritual condition more successful. Despair had too long possessed him to be easily dismissed; and, it is to be feared, Lefevre rather cherished than resisted it. He had quarrelled with the world, but he did not abhor it. He was vexed with the pains and penalties of sin; but was not prepared to renounce it as a thing wholly hateful. He was not an enemy to hope; but he knew, that in a sinful course, there is much to fear and little to hope; he was, therefore, willing to separate from the one, to be free from the other. He had found, with many others who have been resolved on wickedness, that *despair is an opiate to fear*, and he trusted, if he could persuade himself that he had no concern in religion, he should be so far justified in neglecting it.

However, the violence of Lefevre's passion was now subsiding, and the thirst of curiosity was satiated. In the fit of disappointment he had determined to retire from the world; and, even in his sober thoughts, he was so convinced of its evils, as to be

willing to forsake its most troublesome and irregular paths. He had experienced that uncontrolled passions are insupportable tyrants; and he was disposed, though not to *crucify* them, to put them under *some restraint*. This disposition, though far from pure in its origin, and promising to continue only as a *rest* to the passions, had already recovered him comparatively to regular and moral habits; and one paragraph in Douglas's correspondence had an insensible tendency to strengthen and prolong its existence.

CHAPTER XX.

Lefevre had naturally a taste for domestic pleasures. He was the favorite of children, and, by many obliging attentions, discovered an interest in the female sex. He had, however, never seriously determined on wedded life. In the first instance, he was deterred by his circumstances; and afterwards, by his irregular habits: for his generosity would not allow him deliberately to unite himself to an excellent female, with the fear of exposing her to the ills of poverty, or the anguish of neglect. Now, indeed, as his resources were improved, and he had retreated from excesses which cost him so much, his eye turned involuntarily towards domestic life, but he could not permit himself to *dwell* on it.

He had lately been introduced to a family near Sevenoaks, in which was a young lady, of whom he could not think with common sentiments of esteem. He had the

highest opinion of her. 'She is,' thought he, 'every way qualified to make me happy.—But—no—I must speak in the *past* time. *Once* she might have made me so—*now* it is too late! And if she could, I could not render *her* happy. I am unworthy of her. Miserable as I am, I should make any one so, who was connected with me. I will never sacrifice a worthy woman to my wishes! No! I will keep my wretchedness to myself.'

Wallis knew the state of Lefevre's mind; and he was desirous of raising his hopes to the object, in which he was evidently interested. Altogether of a weaker character, Wallis was never tempted to follow up a worldly course to extremity. His passions were busy, but not impetuous—unruly but not daring. He loved himself above all things; and pure selfishness generally supplied him with sufficient sagacity to know, in the pursuit of any object, when the punishment was palpably greater than the gratification. Whenever this was the case, he immediately relinquished the pleasure; and he was pleased to dignify,

the act with the name of *self-denial.* In one instance, the influence of Lefevre's example had caused him to trespass on the usual limits, he prescribed to himself; but he instinctively perceived the danger, and as instinctively retreated. From this time, though his inferior in every thing, he looked down on his headlong course with pity, with wonder, and even with contempt; and his friendship for Lefevre, though it had lost much of its power, was rather beneficial than otherwise, as far as it went. He certainly loved Lefevre, as much as his superficial heart could be said to love any thing, that was distinct from himself; and his best efforts were in requisition to recover him from his violent excesses.

With this view, he had first brought him into the presence of Miss D——, the person in question; and he now endeavoured to make her the object of *hopeful* attention. He dwelt on her accomplishments—alluded to her fortune—ridiculed his sense of unworthiness—and assured him he had every encouragement. 'Yes,

yes,' said he, 'trust me—I know how the game lies—the prize is your's if you will but take it. I can tell. Women are deceitful creatures, sure enough—but never deceive me! I can feel their pulse—I have felt hers—and rely upon it, it flutters like the breast of a new-caught robin at the name of Lefevre.'

Wallis's rodomontade had not all the effect he thought it deserved. The most it did was to make Lefevre waver in his purposes. He, for a moment, thought he might be happy and render others so; but, again he fell under the conviction, that nothing remained to him, but the dregs of that cup he had so long been drinking. He purposed, and reversed his purpose, and continued undecided.

While the fluctuating passions of Lefevre were thus attracted and repelled by the allurements of vicious, and the loveliness of innocent, enjoyments, Douglas, by his first letter, informed him of his opening prospects of domestic felicity. This slight allusion to his own hopes, had a surprising influence on the expectations of

Lefevre. From having thought conjugal happiness incompatible with his state, and at the most having wavered for a moment on the subject, he placed it within the sphere of *possibilities*; and immediately resolved, though with hesitating steps, to pursue it. It is not, perhaps, easy to account for this, but so it was. It might arise from that spirit of emulation, of which Lefevre was powerfully the subject. And, if not ascribed to this source, it must be classed with those sudden turns of the mind, of which *all* are conscious, but which *none* can explain.

Hope being permitted to live, soon became vigorous and ardent. Lefevre hastened to Wallis to reveal his change of sentiment, and to devise the best method of proceeding. Wallis was full of surprise and pleasure—ascribed the change, without scruple, to his own arguments,—and agreed to attend his friend the next day, on a visit to the family of Miss D——.

Miss D—— was of a superior class of young ladies. She was possessed of a sound understanding and warm affections,

strict principles and benevolent manners. She was feminine without weakness—kind without ostentation—and accomplished without vanity. She was remarkable for having a paramount *sense of duty*; and endeavoured to obey its dictates uniformly, whether they concerned her fellow creatures or the Supreme Being. She wanted, indeed, only one thing; but that one thing was 'the one thing needful.' She had the form of virtue and godliness; but the life-giving principle was absent. Of this deficiency, however, she was not sensible; she had not been taught its nature or necessity.

She was greatly indebted to an aged grand-mother, with whom she lived, for the best points of her character. Her parents left her an orphan in infancy; and this excellent relative took her under her roof, with the design of superintending her education. For this work she was happily qualified. In her youth she had *felt* the evils of too rigid, and, in her age, she had *seen* the evils of too lax, a system; and she regulated her own plans, by keeping an appre-

hensive eye on these dangerous extremes. Instead of throwing aside the yoke of authority, she relieved it of its irksomeness, by lining it with *kindness*; and often, where she anticipated resistance, by a manner all her own, she made her pupil unawares a party to her views. She was now gathering the fruits of her former labors. Her grand-daughter regarded her, at once, with the highest reverence and purest affection. She was the voluntary, cheerful, and untired companion of her age; and, by her youthful spirits, and filial attentions, she beguiled its wearisomeness, and sweetened its calm enjoyments. —In closing this slight description, it may be proper to observe, that Miss D—— inherited from her parents a small estate worth about £1500; and that she was a principal legatee in the will of her grandmother.

On the morrow, Lefevre, with a lighter heart than he had known for years, or than he thought he could ever know again, joined Wallis on the way to Sevenoaks. Like most light things, however, it began to

flutter most troublesomely under the eddies of the passions, as he approached the end of his ride; and on his arrival, it became so unruly, as actually to traverse all his preconceived purposes. He had decided on his speeches—but he could not utter them. He had determined to be most obliging in his manners—but was uncommonly awkward. He thought of preparing his way by particular attentions to the young lady —it was with constraint and difficulty he could shew her any. So high did his feelings rise, and so little was he in a state to resist them, that they threatened to suppress the very subject of his visit. Lunch came and went—dinner came and went—tea was now on the table—and nothing had been done! Lefevre had said nothing *à propos;* he had merely joined in the general conversations, and very shabbily in them. He had at first concluded, that the forenoon was the most suitable—when it came, he postponed it to the afternoon. The afternoon arrived—it was a drowsy time—he would wait till his spirits were refreshed by tea He was now taking tea with a

design of refreshing them, but they were not refreshed as usual—they had been too much jaded.—In fine, he could not bring himself to the task! 'No,' thought he, 'I cannot do it. I wonder I ever thought I could.—To say, in so many set words, Will you marry me!—I can't do it.—I will write to her—that's the only way to communicate one's sentiments on such a subject.—Then I can say all I meant to say.'

Tea was ended, and Wallis proposed a walk in the garden. The proposal was immediately accepted. He entered the walks with his friend and Miss D——; but soon struck off in another direction, leaving them together. Lefevre, from the moment he resolved on waiving the subject, felt himself at liberty. His conversation became much more free and pleasing. Miss D—— listened with sympathy and spoke with tenderness. Lefevre's heart was elated with satisfaction; and, ignorant of what he did, he gave his observations a direction to the subject which was primary in his thoughts.

'The visit of this day,' said he, 'is not quite a disinterested one.'

'There are few things we do, I am afraid, that are *quite disinterested*,' replied Miss D——, with a smile.

'I meant,' said Lefevre, with a subdued and faultering voice, 'not quite disinterested in relation to—— in relation to— a person not far from me!'

Miss D——'s eyes fell—her countenance colored to crimson. They continued walking some time they knew not whither. They looked not—they scarcely breathed. Lefevre, however, had passed the Rubicon, and he must go forward. His companion sighed. He suppressed his emotions and said—

'From what has escaped me, Miss D—— will perceive. I have a regard for her. May I hope that any attentions of mine can make that regard *mutual?*'

She remained silent. It arose from any thing except indifference. Her head drooped like the rose under the falling shower—her whole frame was agitated.

She motioned to sit down on a chair they approached.

'You are not well,' said Lefevre, scarcely knowing that he spoke at all. 'What can I do——'

'O, nothing—leave me,'—she replied, with a trembling and hasty voice.

'Leave you! O, don't say it!—look on me—speak to me!—only say I may address you—say you are *disengaged.*'

She endeavored to raise her head, but only effected it in part, and struggling with her feelings, said—'O, sir!—my grandmother—leave me, leave me—a little.'

'*Dear* Miss D——!' exclaimed Lefevre—he could say no more. He was intoxicated with joy at this reference to her guardian, and immediately turned towards the house in pursuit of her.

He found her alone in the parlour, with a countenance rather more raised and anxious than usual, as though guessing the nature of his errand. He avowed his attachment—expressed his hopes—and referred to his circumstances, with a faultering tongue and a beating heart. Many

were the blunders he committed—many his attempts to correct them—but seldom were they improved by the attempt.

However, his was not the repulsive task, to acknowledge feelings where the acknowledgment was treated with coldness and scorn. Aged as she was, this worthy personage had not forgotten the sentiments of youth, and was always benevolently prepared to sympathize in them. She behaved to Lefevre with the utmost delicacy and respect. She gratified his affection by speaking in candid and tender terms of her granddaughter; and pacified his fears by assuring him, that should the connexion appear to involve her happiness, there would be no obstacle in the way to it,

Lefevre respectfully kissed her hand—called her in his thoughts 'the best—the kindest of relations'—and with a heart less anxious but more joyful, than that with which he entered the house hastened from it in search of her, who was the spring of all his emotion.

He came to the seat on which he had left her—but she was not there. He was

anxious—'Why did I leave her so abruptly?' said he—'Perhaps she became worse.' He continued to walk as he spoke, and soon perceived her moving, slowly and thoughtfully, down a green alley that led to the arbor. He quickly joined her and announced his success. They continued to walk and commune with each other for nearly an hour, when Lefevre received a summons from Wallis. They had agreed to sleep at Bromley that night, in their way to town; and, as the shades of evening were coming on, it was necessary they should start. The separation was one of mutual regret, but of mutually good understanding.

The intercourse being thus opened, it was carried forward for some weeks by letter and occasional visits, with growing satisfaction to both parties. Lefevre, indeed, soon found he had a rival—but a rival, from whom he had nothing to fear. Mr. Simpkins—if his name deserves to be recorded—was an empty, conceited and positive young man. He had, however, a good person and a handsome fortune.

These he adored, and, next to these, he vowed he *adored* Miss D——. He concluded, with such pretensions, no young lady, situated as Miss D—— was, would venture to refuse him. With this notion in his head, he had set down his repulses to the coquetry of the sex, and only renewed his addresses accordingly. When Lefevre came in the way, his bad passions, which are always much stronger than the good ones in weak characters, were put in motion; and, he determined to contend, if not for love, for victory. He became fulsome in his professions, and persecuting in his addresses; and, by proposing to settle £500. a year upon her, and start a chariot on the day of marriage, he thought to secure his prize by a *coup de main*. To his utter astonishment, however, he found a female heart proof against all his bribes. All his overtures only raised indifference to antipathy—they were rejected without hesitation—and he, at length, retired from the hated presence of his successful competitor, with wounded pride festering in his heart.

Although the attentions of Simpkins were far from benefitting himself, they had a tendency to strengthen the very bonds he wished to break asunder. The presence of such a man set off to great advantage the respectful reserve, the frank manners, the freedom from paltry jealousy, which were manifested in the conduct of Lefevre; while it furnished an opportunity of discovering, the retreating modesty, the transparent simplicity, the firm dignity of Miss D——. Neither party seemed to require such *stimuli* as these to quicken their affections; it may readily be concluded, therefore, that they had a powerful tendency to accelerate and confirm their attachments.

Much has been said of the happy influence of a virtuous and worthy attachment on character. Lefevre now became an instance of this. He had not permitted himself to think of addressing Miss D—— without previously resolving, to sacrifice every thing inconsistent with his proposals to her; and, as all the energies of his pas-

sions were soon turned into this new channel, he found no difficulty in fulfilling his purposes. Low as he had fallen, he seemed now rising from the abyss of vice on the wings of hope and love; and he rejoiced afresh in a connection that made a labor easy to him, which he had formerly found impracticable. He looked back on the past with melancholy sorrow; but he began to cheer himself by thinking, he might recover what he had lost. Engrossed by one object, he learnt to renounce as insipid, his recent society and pleasures. He applauded himself on his success; and looked round on his original connexions and employments, with desire and expectation. Still more satisfied with himself, he experienced greater facility in resisting the habits of free drinking, which he had formed; and he determined *wholly* to subdue them. 'Yes,' said he, with new-born joy glistening in his eyes,—'I will recover myself—I will make myself worthy of *her*. Douglas shall *yet* see that I have power to *resolve* and *keep* my resolution.'

To witness such resolutions in Lefevre at this period, and to see so many of them in the way of accomplishment, is truly gratifying; yet it must be observed, for the benefit of the young reader, that his resolutions were palpably grounded on his *inclinations*, rather than a *sense of duty*—a sandy and precarious foundation.

Full of high purposes, Lefevre paid a visit to Douglas. He knew he had now a tale to tell, that would greatly please his benevolent mind; and he felt that his approbation would really improve his bliss. Douglas received him alone, that their interview might not be overawed. He had not seen him for two long years, and he feared that this call was rather the fruit of necessity than of choice. The air of Lefevre, however, soon dispelled his fears; and they entered into conversation on the past, in which the delicacy of friendship was conspicuous on one side, and on the other, an unusual candour of confession. The subject on which Lefevre meant to converse first and chiefly, was postponed

till the very last. It was only as he was rising, with his hat in his hand, that he said with assumed carelessness—

'Do you know that much of what I have referred to, is to be traced to an event which I am anticipating, but which I have not mentioned.'

'No—what is it?'

'Would you guess marriage?'

'*Marriage!*' exclaimed Douglas, with more surprise in his manner than he wished.

'Yes,' replied Lefevre with less firmness of voice.

'To whom?'

'To a Miss D——;—you do not know her—I wish you did. I'm sure you would approve her.'

'I dare say I should if you think so—you know my taste—Is she of unspotted family?'

'Yes—very good—very respectable!'

'Sensible?'

'Yes—very!'

'Prudent?'

'Yes—manages every thing in the house.'

'Good tempered?'

'Yes—sweetness itself!'

'Modest?'

'Of course—full of your favorite reserve.'

'Pious?'

Lefevre's ready replies failed him. That *single* word evidently distressed him. However, after some hesitancy, he answered—

'Ah! I wish I was half as good—I wish I was worthy of her!'

Douglas was sorry the last question had escaped him; and, accepting this vague reply, continued—

'Well, Charles, I hope you will be thoroughly satisfied on two things, before you talk of marriage seriously.'

'What are they?' said he hastily.

'First, that you can make the object of your attachment happy. And secondly, that she can make you so. There may be excellent qualifications on each side, where there is not this *mutual fitness*; and without this they are as nothing.'

'Heigh, heigh!' taking Douglas by the hand and passing to the door—'I am fully satisfied of them already. Believe me,' continued he smiling, 'we are not like *two spheres,* which have but one point of union; but like *two planes* that meet *throughout.*'

So saying, the friends parted. Upon the whole, Douglas was pleased to find any thing had wrought such a change on Lefevre. He was constrained, however, to recur to a time, in which he would not have allowed himself to think of piety and marriage as *separable* things, and he sighed under the recollection.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE following day Lefevre had set apart for a visit to Miss D——; and, having made needful arrangements, he started with the sun to fulfil his intention. It was a fine autumnal morning; and, with a heart full of gratified love, he was in a condition to enjoy it. He thought the sun shone brighter than usual; and he drank in, with peculiar relish, the fine bracing air, that was stirring amongst the Surry and Kentish hills. Every object in nature wore a smiling aspect to him, and seemed inviting him back to his long lost pleasures. In present enjoyment, he for a moment forgot the slackened pace of his horse; and, then recollecting himself, clapped his spurs to its side, to hasten him to the object, who had insensibly given a charm to every thing. Lefevre had often pressed the nomination of a day for completing his connection with Miss

D——; and he now visited her with a good hope of success—at least, he determined to carry the point *if possible.*

With such determination on his lips, Lefevre arrived at the residence of his friend. But alas! his attention was soon called off from the flattering purpose he had been cherishing. He looked towards the parlour window as he dismounted, for the countenance which generally greeted him—no countenance was there; though he had sent information of his coming. He entered the house with trepidation, and passed into the parlour. No one was there but the servant.

'Where is Miss D——?' said he.

'In her room I believe Sir,' was the reply, as the servant closed the door.

Lefevre walked up and down the room—he was too uneasy to sit. In a few minutes the grand-mother came in. He hastened to her with his usual salutations. With a disturbed air, she retreated a step to avoid them, and spoke not.

'Oh! madam,' cried Lefevre, 'what does this mean?—pray tell me?'

'Ah! Charles,' said she with pity in her voice. Then suppressing her feeling, continued,—'Mary sends you this note and parcel, and begs you to excuse seeing her.'

This sentence fell like lead on the heart of Lefevre. Agitated as he was he threw himself into a chair, that stood near; and burst the seal of the letter to assure himself of the contents. It was, however, some time before he could read it—his eyes were so dizzy; and after reading it several times, he could not comprehend it—his senses were so confused. He sat with it in his hand in a state of stupor. At length he passed over its contents with more composure. They were as follows:—

'*Thursday Morning*.

'With this note I return to Mr. Lefevre his letter of yesterday, and those of every former date. The period is come at which our correspondence must cease for ever. To enter on the reasons of my conduct would be only to reproach you, and this

I will not do. " Alas! you must suffer too much from the reproaches of your own conscience. Do me the justice, however, to think, that I am not actuated by caprice and resentment. I assure you the step I have taken is both *deliberative* and *decisive.* I have acted under a sense of duty, and directly against the dictates of feeling; and I am conscious of doing *right,* while I am *pained* in doing it.

'But the more I write the more I shall distress you. My grand-mother, who has kindly consented to give you this, will answer any question you may think necessary; but the less said on the subject the better. Think no more of me, or of our intercourse, except as it may have an influence in fixing you in the paths of virtue. O, Charles, this is the last letter I shall ever write you! Lost as you are to me, be not lost to yourself—lost to the innocent delights which Providence has so bountifully placed within our reach! Adieu! Adieu!

'MARY D——.'

'*To Mr. Lefevre.*'

Lefevre concluded from this letter that Miss D—— had been informed of his past errors in conduct, and that Simpkins had been the informant. He also allowed himself to think, that the circumstances had been aggravated, and that Miss D— had formed her purpose on a supposition that he continued in the practice of evils which belonged to a past period. Full of this hope, he flew to her venerable relative, who had seated herself at the other extremity of the room, exclaiming—'Oh madam, there must be some mistake here! Simpkins has maligned me'——

'No, Charles, I fear not,' replied she, with serious concern. 'My daughter and myself were too reluctant to believe any thing against you, to listen to the tongue of malice. Mr. Simpkins, indeed, did send us a long account of your past life, and it gave us uneasiness; but we thought it might arise—wicked man! – wholly from his resentment; and if not, that it was greatly exaggerated. I felt it my duty to be fully satisfied on the subject, and I am grieved to say, it is but too true. There,'

said she, presenting a letter to him, 'you are at liberty to judge for yourself. I believe you will not deny what you know to be correct.'

The letter bore Simpkins's signature. It proved, that he had taken incredible pains to collect every thing unfavorable to Lefevre's character, and to place each article in its most unfavorable light. Yet, while the coloring of malice and revenge rested on the whole statement, he felt that the facts, in substance, could not be denied. Tears of indignation, at the triumph of his rival, and of grief at his own follies, burst from his eyes whilst he said——

'Yes, madam, it is too true, I acknowledge; but the truth is told by an *enemy*. However, I scorn to palliate what I was not ashamed to do. Yet, let me assure you of one thing, from the time I resolved to address your granddaughter, I have done nothing inconsistent with my professions.'

'I believe it! But you should have been candid. You should have acquainted us with the past. By concealment, we place ourselves in the power of others.

O, what would my child—what should I have suffered, had this been discovered, only when separation would have been impossible!'

'Madam,' said Lefevre, touched with anger, 'I detest concealment, nor did I seek it; though, perhaps, I ought to have acted otherwise than I have. But I knew you sought my character of Wallis; and he can testify, I never forbade him naming any incident in my whole life.'

'Wallis indeed,' said she, 'is much to blame. We relied on him—he has deceived us, and brought us and yourself into these painful circumstances.'

'Let me, madam, see Miss D——. Let me have an opportunity of explaining my conduct to her.'

'You must excuse seeing her,' she replied, 'It can answer no end whatever.'

'O, madam,' cried Lefevre, agonized at the thought, 'not see her! I *must* see her!—indeed I must—I cannot leave this house without seeing her!'

'Mr. Lefevre,' said she with an assu-

med dignity, while trembling at the violence of his emotions, 'Are you aware that this is *my* residence; and that no one has a right to use such language in it to me?'

'Madam,' he replied with a softened voice, 'forgive me! I was not prepared for this stroke. You know not how it afflicts me—I am not quite myself—indeed I am not—pity me. You have a kind nature—intercede for me. You once had a son—think that I am that son—feel for me. Beg your daughter to see me—I cannot be satisfied unless I see her.' As he spoke the tears rolled fast and silently down his burning cheek.

This tenderness deeply affected the grandmother. A convulsive trembling played on the wrinkles, which time had placed about her lips, and, without trusting herself to speak, she hurried from the room.

A few minutes afterwards she returned with her granddaughter, who, by the paleness of her looks, was evidently suffering from suppressed feeling.

Hope and fear struggled in the bosom of Lefevre, at the sight of her, so violently, that he could not address her.

'I had hoped you would have spared us this painful interview,' said Miss D.—— 'but as you request it I come.'

'O,' said Lefevre, affected by her changed manner, 'speak not so coldly—Receive my explanation—Let me hope—'

'You have no reason to think me cold on such an occasion. Alas! I am not ashamed to acknowledge, this affair has cost me more than you—more than my greatest enemy, would have wished me to suffer.'

The forbidden tear stole from her eye. Lefevre was melted at her emotion. He seized her hand, and exclaimed—'My dear Miss D——! Let me——.'

She withdrew her hand, and interrupting him, said, 'Mr. Lefevre, this is not wise. Do not misconstrue my *involuntary* feelings. I do feel—but my feelings cannot change my opinion—should I even sink under them, my resolution will remain the same. To destroy the power of sus-

pense on your mind, let me deliberately assure you——.'

'O, say it not!' interrupted Lefevre—'I am lost if you say it! Say you will use your influence to fix me in virtue—to raise me to happiness!'

'I cannot—indeed I *cannot!*' she replied, with an agitated voice. 'My heart knows I wish you happy—wish you every thing that is good--but I must not sacrifice myself.'

'No!'—said he—'you need not. I should be all you wish—all I wish to be. O, you know not what power you have over me!'

'I *cannot* trust that power! All who have trusted it, have repented of it. In the past you have submitted to one temptation after another, and what security is there for the future? And, could that security be given, it would not be sufficient for me. No—forgive me in saying it, duty imposes it on me—I could never give my hand to a person, allowing him to be reformed, who has, in former life, been fami-

liarized with vice. This will convince you *that I never can be your's.* No—And in withdrawing my hand from you, I do it with a resolution of never giving it to any other! Yes—my vain dream of bliss is followed by real sorrows! and I only blame my own indiscretion for it!'

The tears flowed freely as she ceased. Lefevre stood motionless. The struggle was deep in his soul. Hope expired—despair triumphed—the conflict of the passions produced a calm, more dreadful than their violence. At length, raising his eyes, and forgetful for the moment of those about him, he exclaimed, with a tone as deep as his feeling, 'O God! it is *thine* hand—and I *deserve* it!' Then catching her hand, he pressed and repressed it to his burning lips, and dropping it said, 'There! now it's all over! now I'm a lost man! The outcast of Providence!—I have *no* friend!—no—neither in heaven nor on earth!——O, weep not for me—I deserve it not! Best of women! I ought not to be your's—I am not worthy of you!

Forget me—Tell me I have not power to make you unhappy—that *alone* can give me some comfort!'

He paused—but was answered only by sobs and tears. He was passing to the door, but checking himself, he turned back and said—' At least, Miss D——, do me the justice to believe, that, in my conduct, before you, I was not *acting a part.* No—whatever I have been—whatever I may be—I was not a *hypocrite.* I acted uprightly—and really meant to be what I professed—Farewell—for ever farewell!'

So saying, he dashed the stale tears from his eyelids—and hurried from the room and the house. 'Mr. Lefevre!' cried the agitated grandmother, ' leave us not thus.'—' O, stay! stay!'—exclaimed Miss D——, roused by the voice of her relative, to a sense of his departure, and losing all restraint on her feelings.

Lefevre did not obey—did not hear. He had fled to the stable—thrown himself on his saddle—and, in an instant, the shoes of the horse were ringing on the pebbled court yard. The chords of her

heart answered to every sound. She hastened to a window that commanded a corner of the road. She saw Lefevre turn the angle—and disappear—she *felt it was for ever!*—She clasped her hands in anguish—a sense of suffocation rose to her throat—she hurried to her closet to weep and sigh in secret!

Lefevre sighed not—wept not—spoke not—thought not. The vultures of remorse and despair were busy at his heart; and he surrendered it as a victim, without an effort or a wish for its preservation. He was alive only to a sense of wretchedness; and, he hurried over the road, which, an hour ago, had been so pleasing to him, as if he felt that change of place might bring relief. Wretchedness, however, like happiness, is not the inhabitant of *places* but of *persons;* and Lefevre found himself at home, without any mitigation of his pains. He locked his door, and threw himself on some chairs that were near it, overcome with that stupor which follows bodily exhaustion, and acute mental sufferings. Thus he lay for some hours

When he was aroused, it was by the voice of his hostess, inviting him to take refreshments. These he refused, and seating himself at his bureau, undesignedly began to look over the correspondence of Miss D——. It was full of kind sentiments and felicitous anticipations, sweetly veiled in modesty. His heart sickened as he glanced on them. He folded the whole in one parcel; and, having directed it to the writer, he cast it back into the drawer. The same drawer contained her miniature likeness. He seized and opened it. It had an amiable and smiling expression. It spoke of tenderness supported by dignity. His hand trembled—his lip quivered—he threw it from him—and then instantly snatched it up again, and, without looking on it, thrust it in his bosom. He walked the room awhile, and then threw himself on his bed, rather to change his posture, than in reference to sleep. Sleep, for that night, he had not, if that term involves *repose*; for, through the whole of it, he had either a wakeful or dreamy sense of his misery upon him.

On the morrow, Lefevre arose—not to more wretchedness—but to a more distinct perception of the sources of his wretchedness. In any supposable circumstances, such a stroke must have been severely felt; but, in his circumstances, there was every thing to aggravate the blow. He was rejected—but his conscience compelled him to justify the hand that repulsed him. He had, how improperly soever, identified his return to virtue and religion, with his union to Miss D——; and, now, he could not separate them. 'Yes,' said he, and it was the first sentence he had uttered since he left Sevenoaks,—'I have lost her, and with her, I have lost every thing. I seem to have been raised by an angel's hand from the pollution of the world—but it was only to make my fall the deeper. I am ruined—and it is all my own fault—but—no—it is all my own fault! If I had never known vice—never forsaken religion—this heavy stroke had never come upon me! Well—it cannot be worse.'

In this desperate state of mind, what

was to be done? Reason and hope would have urged him to remain exemplary in his conduct, with the prospect of its yet influencing the mind of Miss D——; or, if no expectation could have been rested here, they would have pressed him into the paths of religion, as the only ones favorable to his peace. But, alas! from the voice of reason and hope, the soul of Lefevre now was alienated. His pride would not allow him to look on one, who had decidedly rejected him; and who, by that rejection, had made herself his superior; nor would it suffer him, to bend in humility, under the chastising rod of Providence. Pierced as his bosom was with the shafts of the spoiler, he still exposed it to his foe! Like the silly hind, he was alive only to his wounds, and not to the quarter whence they came—he sought rather an opiate to lull his pains, than the hand of divine skill to operate on the seat of them.

In such a temper of mind, to one who had acquired the habit of drinking, and who had, indeed, only weakened without having fully conquered it, what a tempta-

tion must spirituous liquors have presented. In fact, the temptation to him appeared invincible; and he gave himself up to its power, without regard to consequences. Thus ended the reformation of Lefevre! Thus, will every reformation end, that is founded on *passion*, and not on *principle*. 'Passion,' as Douglas has well observed, 'is a mere energy,' and is *only good*, as it is under the direction of *good principles*.

'*It cannot be worse*,' Lefevre had said, when he looked round with despair on his situation. He was mistaken. There was a point of conduct, which yet remained unimpugned; but, which his very despair made vulnerable. Through all the changes, which have been noticed in the course of the narrative, he had fully preserved his character with his employers. In the office he had no rivals for skill and despatch, qualities highly valued in the routine of business; and, in the agency, which he had recently assumed, his address, his punctuality, and his integrity, had called forth peculiar expressions of

confidence and admiration, from the firm with which he was connected. Indeed, he flattered himself on the favor of his superiors, in proportion as he excluded himself from higher satisfaction; and this favor was the more dear to him, as, to his high spirit, it seemed necessary to soften the ties of servitude.

But, dear as his character with the world was to him, he was insensibly taking steps to lower it. His former comparatively moderate use of liquors was not now sufficient, to drown in oblivion his accumulated sorrows. He, therefore, applied to them as frequently as he thought he wanted them; and, what from their losing their power by repetition, and, what from their really strengthening the disease they were designed to qualify, he soon *wanted* them nearly all the day through!

Nothing is more opposed to the habits of business, than the habit of drinking. Lefevre soon discovered an irregularity, which subjected him to notice, and produced dissatisfaction with his employers. The favor with which he was regarded,

however, induced connivance at deficiencies, which, it was thought, could only have an occasional existence, with such a person as Lefevre. He was notwithstanding, so far from profiting by their lenity, that, with that rash assurance which is one effect of intemperance, he judged himself *necessary* to them; and continued to discover his disinclination to business. Forbearance, on the other hand, was speedily exhausted. At nearly the same time, he received a regular communication from the principals of the office, reprimanding him for his neglect, and couched in threatening terms; and a request to balance and present his accounts connected with the agency.

This last request was made in a respectful manner, and might have been regarded as in the course of business. It was, however, the first that had been made to Lefevre of the kind; and, with his disordered mind and romantic notions of honor, it was likely he might construe it into a suspicion of his integrity. Nothing could exasperate him equally with this; and just

now it affected him the more, as he was not in a state immediately to comply with the requisition. He had postponed some business of several days, which he thought could be done *at any time*, till it accumulated upon him in a formidable manner. He could not pass his accounts properly, till he recovered from these delays; and he could not recover from them suddenly. Unhappily too, he had prematurely anticipated his domestic establishment; and had consequently brought upon himself some *extra* expences. A small bill became due, which he was obliged to take up; and not having sufficient cash of his own, he borrowed a small sum from his agency account, to meet the emergency. He had never before done this; and now he did it in the uprightness of his heart, and with the full prospect of replacing the money to the account, before it should be necessary to pass it. The summons he had received, therefore, literally confounded him. If he obeyed it directly, he might fix on himself those suspicions which he had imputed to *them*, and incur censure, neither of which

could he endure; and if he neglected it, he could not think it would in the least amend his predicament.

The communication from the office affected Lefevre differently, but not less. If he thought his integrity questioned by the one, he felt his pride sorely mortified by the other. The step indeed was rather severe. Such official and formal reproof was seldom resorted to in the first instance; he would have trembled to have thought himself in danger of it; and indeed, as his irregularities had been but trifling, and were set off by ten years persevering and exemplary service, he was far from meriting it. Such reproof too, was always matter of notoriety in the office; and the subject of it became the butt of insolent wit, and paltry merriment. Lefevre had stood *first* of his class; his conduct in his duties had been faultless; he had been respected by his fellows, and applauded by his superiors;—how could his spirit, brook the reproaches of those whom he had always considered his *inferiors?*

On the whole, it is impossible to de-

scribe the feelings of Lefevre. He arraigned his friends—justified himself—condemned his employers—rose against Providence;—and then fell under the heavier weight of *self-accusation.* Anger, remorse, pride, resentment, fear and hate, created a tempest in his soul, which threatened the frame it inhabited, and which was only allayed by the master hand of *despair.* This demon, nourished by Lefevre's errors, had long enveloped from his eyes his fairest prospects; and, now, the last bright spot on which the star of hope shone, sank into the surrounding darkness! His mind was wrought to desperation. He made no formal resolutions; but his heart involuntarily settled in a purpose of never facing those, whom he had served so faithfully, and who, he thought, had treated him with such ingratitude!

Under the influence of this purpose, and excited by the dread of more messages, he wrote two notes to say, that he was ill (this he could truly assert;) and to excuse himself on that account. Having done this he fastened the door and cast himself on

his bed, indifferent alike to food—to comfort—to life! Even the habit of drinking, which nothing else had wholly subdued, was deprived of its power by the universal listlessness of his soul!

As time wore away, it left him capable of some reflection; but this only gave acuteness to his sorrows. He was compelled to allow, that the blame he had hastily cast on others, was originally his *own*. From his worldly disappointments, he was thrown back upon his religious declensions, as the source of *all* evils. Conscience, from having slumbered so long, now awoke 'to bite like an adder, and sting like a serpent.' She busied herself in throwing up to his view every event which he had struggled to forget; and seemed determined to revenge the affront, which he had so repeatedly given, in the hour of his utmost calamity. Coward as Lefevre had always been to his conscience, he now writhed under the pangs he could no longer escape, and vainly wished that they and existence would terminate together!

Meantime, the night shut in still, close, and sultry, foreboding the approach of storm. As the hours passed, every sign of convulsion in the elements encreased; and, before midnight arrived, the laboring atmosphere discharged itself in the most violent manner. The hail dashed to the ground in heavy columns; the blue lightnings glazed by fits the face of the whole earth and heavens; while the thunder rolled and broke in one continuous peal, like the varying but constant roaring of tumultuated waters!

Lefevre was not superstitious. He had often enjoyed the sublimity of a storm; but this was no season for enjoyment. It gave power to an incensed conscience, and terror to the impressions of his guilt. 'The sins of his youth were set in order before him;' and the hand of death seemed pointing to a dark, a hopeless, a fathomless eternity. He bit his lip under the poignancy of inward anguish; and trembled to find himself at the mercy of a raised imagination. He shut his eyes, lest he should see any other form than his own;

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—he closed his ears, lest he should hear some unearthly sounds;—and, enveloping himself in his bed-covering, breathed quick and hard, while perspiration started from every pore! Joyful at that hour was the cry of the passing watchman, breaking on the terrible solitude of the night; and more joyful the first dawnings of opening day, which threw a check on the disordered fancy of Lefevre!

Another day and night passed away in a similar manner, only that a continuance of the same distress, left him less able to support it. On the third day it became absolutely insupportable to Lefevre. Imagination, long unruly, now usurped dominion; and sometimes succeeded in giving to her chimeras the character of substance and reality!

CHAPTER XXII.



DOUGLAS had not heard from Lefevre since the interview, which has been noticed. He had, however, heard of Miss D——; and from the character she bore, he hoped the union might effect what nothing else had been able to accomplish—his recovery to good conduct and rational enjoyment. With this hope he looked forward with some anxiety to his domestic settlement; and occasionally wondered within himself whether it had taken place.

While his mind remained in this state, he was awakened one night from his sleep by a heavy knocking at the house door! On hastening to his chamber window, to ascertain who was there, a well known voice, exclaimed 'Douglas!'

'Charles!' said he, 'is it you?'

'Yes,'—was the reply—'Come down!'

Douglas soon put himself in a con-

dition to leave his room, and give admission to his friend; confounded, however, at the reason of so untimely a visit. As the door opened, Lefevre pushed into the passage, and thence into the parlour, exclaiming, as Douglas remained to shut it, 'There—there—now I'm in—that's right!'

Douglas followed to the room, and observed him. His whole body was in a state of extreme agitation—a hopeless gloom strayed rather than rested on his countenance, while his eye rolled in strange wildness from object to object. Douglas questioned his safety in his presence. However, he preserved calmness of manner, and in silence continued to notice him; judging it wise to give him an opportunity of speaking, as this might, more than any thing, tend to relieve him.

Lefevre glanced upon him, and read the state of his mind. 'O,' said he, 'there's nothing the matter with me, I hav'n't drank a pint of beer these three days—Feel my pulse, (baring his wrist)—But

I've seen strange things to-night! -- but I'm safe *here*—don't you think I am? I knew you would protect me Douglas!'

'Certainly I will,' said Douglas, 'Come, sit down, and compose yourself.'

'Yes—but I'm safe *here*, a'nt I?'

'I believe you are perfectly safe with me. Come sit down, and, if any thing distresses you, tell me.'

'Distresses me!—Ah!—I've seen strange things to night! But you say, I'm safe with you, and so I am!—I'm not very well—I think I shall die—my forehead's hot—very hot, (placing his hand on it)—but I wanted to see you—well, I'll tell you,' (seating himself with a little more composure.)

'Do you believe in supernatural appearances Douglas?' he continued. 'You know I did not—but I believed *nothing*.—Well, let me tell you—As I lay a bed to-night, I saw a man's hand at the foot-post of my bedstead, waving like so (as he waved his hand.)—I rose in the bed—and then it was still—and pointed with the fore-finger—and disappeared. I lay down

—and immediately it returned, beckoning as before. I arose again—and then it was still—and pointed as it had done and vanished. I lay down again—It came directly—and began beckoning. I started up—and it pointed again.—"What is it?" I said, "Am I to go any where?" It continued pointing.—"Where shall I go?—To Sevenoaks?"—It still pointed.—"To Douglas?"—It began beckoning. "Well," said I, "I'll go—I'll go to him directly—I'll tell him every thing!"'—His eyes fell as he ceased, and he started from his seat, evidently struggling with some latent burden.

'Come, my dear Charles,' said Douglas, 'pray be composed. I am glad to see you, and will do any thing in my power for you.'

'It's too late—you are good—But call me not "your dear Charles." My name is *Charles Lefevre.* I am dear to nobody now! No—rejected—disgraced—insulted—ruined—forsaken of man and God!'

'What then has happened? At least, Charles, I have not forsaken you!'

He was agitated. 'No—but I have forsaken you—injured you! But I'll tell you—I came here on purpose to tell you!' Then clasping his hands and dropping his head, as if about to fulfil a painful resolution, he said —'You remember, when you were at Plymouth writing to me, and bringing a charge against me?'

'Yes, I do.'

——'You remember that I denied it in the most solemn manner?'

'Yes.'

'It *was true notwithstanding.*'

'True!' cried Douglas, starting in his chair.

He had the most unlimited confidence in Lefevre's veracity. It was in a moment destroyed, and he could not suppress this utterance of his astonishment. His mind was distressed. 'O where,' thought he, 'shall I look for truth and honesty after this?'

Lefevre was too much engaged with himself to notice either his expression or countenance. He sullenly repeated, 'True!

yes it was true!' He paused. Douglas could not speak. He resumed—'This lie has sunk like burning lead to the bottom of my soul! I could not die with it on my conscience. Now I am satisfied! I *believe* I shall die—I *know* I shall be damned!'

He spake like one, who thought, that this confession broke his last link with humanity—like one, who was waiting the summons to final punishment. Horror moved on his features; and the chair he occupied trembled with his emotion!

'O Charles!' said Douglas, 'do you know what you are saying? Do you know what it is to be *damned?'*

With a voice and smile inconceivably unnatural and shocking, he replied—'*Know what it is?* I *think* I do! They who have suffered as I have these three nights, may easily know what is 'damnation.'

'Charles! Charles!—you must not talk so! This is language suited only to those spirits, who have fallen below hope!'

'And am not I *below hope?* Am not

I *like them?* Do not I suffer the wrath of God? Do not I feel the unquenchable fires within me?——'

'Charles!' interrupted Douglas, 'I beseech you—this must not be—quit the subject——'

'Quit the subject!' he cried, renewing his ghastly smile,—'*quit the subject!* Why, I can think of nothing else!—It haunts me by night and day, and I cannot get rid of it! O, Douglas! I have lighted up the fires of hell in my conscience and I *cannot* extinguish them!'

Douglas, oppressed with grief and terror for his friend's desperation, sat gazing on him in silence, allowing him to speak for a while as his feelings compelled.

Lefevre, accordingly, reverted to the past with more regularity than could have been expected. He confessed his follies, crimes, and disappointments; and, so far from extenuating any thing, he endeavoured to give to his whole conduct a character that would justify his despair.

However, the mere utterance of his wretchedness evidently mitigated it; he

became more and more composed as he proceeded. His miseries had been pent up within his heart, till they threatened to burst the vessel that held them, unless they were allowed a natural channel of expression. In that hour of distress, he had looked round on the circle he had formed to himself for a friend, to whom he might confide the sorrows of his soul. It was vain! He felt there was loneliness in the society of the world; and that, although there might be *union* in vice, there could be no *friendship*. He was driven to Douglas; and, in defiance of all that pride and self-love had said, or could say, without hesitation, he sought, by communicating, to lighten a burthen, which became altogether intolerable.

Reason, which had reeled under the sallies of an exasperated imagination, now seemed to recover her just ascendancy. Douglas made a few observations, calculated to sooth the pains, which, in the disordered state of his mind and body, he thought it unwise either to probe or to heal. As, through the last two nights,

he had suffered so greatly, without the usual relief of sleep, rest was the first requisite. He, therefore, pressed some refreshments on him, and then insisted on his retiring to bed.

On having conveyed Lefevre to an adjoining chamber, he retired to his own; but not to close his eyes. For some time noises were heard in Lefevre's room, and, full of fears, he bent his ear to judge of their import, till the sense was totally fatigued. At length, every sound ceased; and he hoped he was losing, for a while, his weight of woe in the unconsciousness of sleep. Still, Douglas sought not repose. Grief, hope, fear, and affection, were wakeful within him; and were supplying him, alternately, with the fervent prayer, and the serious reflection. He now discovered the *reason* of Lefevre's shunning his society. He earnestly prayed that he might yet be beneficial to his friend. From the evils of sin thus set before his eyes, he learned to abhor and renounce it afresh; and, from observing the bitterness of backsliding from God, he resolved to cleave closer to

the Lord with fuller purpose of heart! Thus, had Douglas tutored himself to improve by the very faults of others; and this is not the first time he gathered strength from the very weaknesses of Lefevre.

In the morning, beyond the hour at which Lefevre had said it was necessary for him to rise, Douglas entered his room. He was still asleep; but in sleep he was a distressing object. His teeth were closed—his eyes half opened—one hand was fixed on his forehead—the other was clenched convulsively—and an indescribable uneasiness moved over his whole countenance. Douglas had not wept during the midnight interview with Lefevre; but there was something irresistibly touching in this scene! The tears of sympathy flowed silently down his cheek, while he said with a whispering voice—'How poor is the rest of the guilty!—Unhappy Lefevre! where will all thy follies end!—Heavenly Shepherd! who didst lay down thy life for the sheep, look on this wretched wanderer, and bring him back to thy blessed fold!'—In the ardor of uttering the last

sentence, his voice insensibly rose. Lefevre started, and, but half awake, exclaimed—'What? Where?—where am I?'

'Be not alarmed, Charles,' said Douglas 'you are safe and with your friend.'

He paused, in an effort to recall the events of the past night. They brought with them the remembrance of his shame. He arose in silence, and, having dressed himself, left Douglas with a promise to return to dinner, and spend the evening in serious conversation.

This promise Lefevre was not able to accomplish. The agitation of his mind had fixed disease on his body; and the fever of the body heightened the perturbation of the mind. The most he could do was to reach home, and his bed became immediately necessary. The fever rose rapidly upon him; and, beneath its sway, he was, alternately, rational and delirious; but, in either state, his thoughts were engrossed by the weight of his guilt. If he reasoned, it was against himself; and, if frantic, it was the frenzy of despair. His hostess, a humane woman, was greatly

alarmed at his conduct; and, in addition to calling in medical assistance, she sent intelligence to his friends of his situation, before the day expired.

Early on the ensuing morning, the faithful and affectionate Mrs. Russell arrived. A delirious fit was upon him. She spake to him; it was useless. He was not *sensible to* surrounding objects. The most affecting, the most awful things escaped him. She sat down by his side, weeping for him, as a mother for a son who refuses to be comforted.

Mr. Douglas came in. All his former feelings were revived. He stood over the bed pensive and prayerful, restraining the violence of his actions, and watching an opportunity to address him.

Lefèvre had, from exhaustion, been silent a few minutes. He began again exclaiming at intervals:—'Mary!—Mary!—but you won't listen to me—no—you rejected me—cast me off—cruel Mary!—Yet you did weep—I remember you did—but it's easy to weep.—I should like to weep—but I can't—(passing his hand over his

fiery eyeballs)—and yet my heart's very sad—very sad indeed!——I told you if you left me I should fall—and now I am fallen low enough, a'n't I?—I shall never get up again!—Perhaps you'll pity me now?—don't you think you'll have to answer for all this?—But I won't accuse you Mary—no I—I won't accuse you!—Why, it's all my own fault—I should have kept as I was—not forsaken my God—not despised my Saviour.——O, Douglas, why did I leave you!—Those base fellows led me away—Ah! Douglas, you should not have let me go, indeed you should not.'—

He paused, and seemed coming to himself.

'Charles!' said Douglas.

He looked towards him—'Don't you know me?' Douglas continued.

'No Sir—I don't know you—I have been very ill—and very wretched!—I have seen strange things!—I told Douglas, and he said he'd come and talk with me.'

'Well, I am Douglas. I have come to talk with you. Don't you know me, Charles?'

Recovered by the sound of his voice, and passing his eyelids over his eyes, to clear his sight and recollection, he exclaimed—'Yes,—you are Douglas!'

'Yes—and I am your friend, and wish to comfort you.'

'Comfort me!—Ah! you cannot—nobody can comfort me!—You ought not to come to me. How I have abused you—injured you—don't you remember *what I told you?*'

'I do—and from my heart, Charles, I forgive you that, and every thing else, you may think you have done against me.'

'Ah! *you* forgive me—you were always kind—but I cannot forgive myself—and God will never forgive me!'

'O yes he will!—"He is waiting to be gracious!"'

'Ah! but not to *me*—not to *me!*'—

'Yes to *you,* Charles!—Was he not gracious to Saul of Tarsus, a persecutor and blasphemer—the "chief of sinners?"'

'Ah! I am worse than *he*—I am the *very* chief of sinners. Consider, I am a *backslider*—that's the *worst* of *all* characters.

'But yet the backslider may be pardoned.—Was not the apostatizing Peter pardoned?'

'His sins were not like *mine.*'——

'But God assures us "he will heal our backslidings—that though our sins are as crimson and scarlet, they shall be white as snow."'

'Yes—that's all true, I believe—but I am an *exception*—who is like *me?*—Do not flatter me Douglas. My condemnation is sealed here (laying his hand on his breast)—Consider, what mercies I have abused—what privileges I have neglected—what convictions I have stifled—what sins I have committed.'—

'For the world, my dear Charles, I would not *flatter* you. I do consider your sins, and all their aggravations; and, while I consider them, I most deliberately assure you, that they do not put you beyond the reach of mercy. No!—though you had committed even more sins than you have, there would be the fullest encouragement to flee to the Saviour! His blood cleanses from *all* sin. We are not condemned, be-

cause we have sinned beyond the efficacy of the atonement; but because, by impenitence and unbelief, we cut ourselves off from its virtue. I know more than any one, of what you have been guilty, but I think you are now committing the greatest sin in your life, by rejecting, in despair, the remedy.'

Lefevre was silent and thoughtful.

'Look to Mount Calvary!' said Douglas,—'look to the cross of Jesus—there hangs all our hope.'—

'O name it not!' he cried,—'that goes to my very soul!—O how have I abused—mocked and crucified the Saviour of sinners!—but for this, there might have been some hope!'

'There is hope yet!—Though you have insulted and neglected him, he looks upon you, as he did on Peter, and invites you to return to him. O look to him Charles!'

'O *do* look to him Charles!' cried Mrs. Russell, dropping down by his bedside, and raising her hands as in supplication.—'He has said, he will cast out *none*

that come to him—if you had a thousand souls, you might trust them all on that.'

'I cannot—I cannot!'

'Ask him to enable you,' said Douglas.

'O *do* ask him Charles!' rejoined Mrs. Russell. 'He has said, ask and ye shall receive—seek and ye shall find.—Do pray to him!—Only say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" He will hear you.'

'Yes, he will hear you, my dear Charles, rely upon it,' said Douglas. 'O think of his love in dying for us, when we were ungodly and rebellious! How much more shall he regard us, when we ask his mercy.'

'It is too late!'

'No!' replied Douglas, 'it is not too late! it cannot be too late while your are out of eternity.'

Lefevre was affected. Douglas wept. Mrs. Russell sobbed. She thought there was a ray of hope. Always ardent, her feelings rose with her hopes, and she continued sobbing and saying,—'O Charles, do be persuaded—do listen to me—listen to Mr. Douglas—you loved Mr. Douglas

—and he loves you—listen to him.—Do *try* to pray.—Bless my ears with one prayer —if it is only "Lord help me,"—Say, Lord help me—do! He will hear you, indeed he will.—Shall we pray for you? —Mr. Douglas, do pray for him—he does not *object*.'

Douglas sank on his knees, but was not in a state for regular prayer. They uttered their desires rather "by cries and tears unto God," than by any connected sentences.

They arose, and, in silence, looked anxiously and tearfully upon him. He had evidently been greatly agitated, and appeared as though his thoughts were beginning to wander. His despair strengthened with the disorder of his mind.—'O don't weep for me,' he cried,—'my heart is so hard, I cannot weep.—Once sympathy was dear to me—but now it's like oil to my burning conscience.'

'We weep,' cried Mrs. Russell, 'for love, for hope; we hope you will recover —we hope our prayers will be heard.'—

'No never!—no never!' he exclaimed

in a deep but resolved voice—'your prayers will bless *you*, but they cannot bless *me*—none can bless me but God, and he *will* not.—It is *just*—I have forsaken him—" I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,"—*think of that!*'

He paused, and was getting more confused. Wallis and his uncle came into the room, but he did not distinguish them. He looked round with wildness, and continued at intervals.—

'Lost, lost, for ever lost!—O I have forsaken my God—he called, but I would not hear—he stretched out his hand, but I rejected it—*think of that!*——See! how his broad eye frowns upon me! O hide me—hide me—from the wrath of the Lamb! Cruel Douglas, to tell me to look to the cross—any thing but that!—

* * * * * * * * * *

O how I burn!—Pour some water over me here (running his hand over his bosom)—*Unquenchable* fire, *think of that!*—a worm that *dieth not*—if it would but die!—Death

is nothing—but it's what comes after death—dreadful—dreadful!

* * * * * * * * * *

Mind I tell you—take care of sin—it's a nasty, bloody thing. If it stains your conscience you'll never get it off—I trifled with it—and I shall never be clean again! Take care of sin!—God wo'n't forgive you else—O, He is good and merciful—very—very—but then he's *just*—he's *just!—think of that!*—O I have forsaken my God—I have forsaken my God!'

Lefevre groaned heavily as he terminated these and some similar exclamations; and looked round on the objects in the chamber, with that 'speculation in his eyes,' which indicated the return of his mind to his senses. Wallis and Lefevre's uncle gazed on each other in wonder.

'Poor fellow! this is only what might have been expected,' said Wallis, veiling his sentiments in ambiguous words, lest Douglas should correct him.

'Expected, indeed,' said the uncle, 'this is what I always thought his over-

righteous ways would come to. I told him it would never hold long, and if it did, it would be sure to turn his brain. You see my words are true. It's all his religion—that's a clear case.'

Lefevre sprung hastily in his bed as the last sentence caught his ear, and exclaimed—'*All my religion, Sir!* O, is the just punishment of my sins to be imputed to religion! No, Sir, it is all for the *want* of religion that you see me thus! I neglected—despised that religion which you awfully blaspheme—this makes me wither and perish as you see, under the curse of Almighty God!'

'Well, don't discompose yourself, Lefevre,' said Wallis, stepping towards him. He had not distinctly recollected his presence. He turned a piercing eye upon him, which spoke to his soul—his tongue faultered a moment, and then he said—'O Wallis! you have ruined me! How can I look at you! Yes—you have not gone the lengths I have—but you *first* led me astray—*first* brought me to base company!' O, I was never unhappy

till I knew *you!* —Yet it was all *my own fault*—I knew better.'

Wallis endeavoured to cover his awkwardness under this address, by assuming an air of indifference.

Lefevre's quick eye, still searching his countenance, observed it.—'O Wallis,' said he, 'attend to me!—I have little to say in this world!—There is hope for *you.* Doubt not the truth of religion. I tried to doubt, but I don't doubt *now!* I *feel* there is a God whom I have offended. I *feel* there is a heaven I have lost. I *feel* there is a hell—I have the witness here (striking his breast)—O do not trifle as *I* have done—as *you* have done—renounce the world—fly to the Saviour. Brave not the terrors of God! I could brave more than you—but see what I am! The finger of God crushes me like a moth!—O 'tis a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God!'

Wallis was somewhat confounded at this personal address, made in such a confident tone, before so many witnesses. However, with his self-complacent, unin-

quiring temper, uneasiness never dwelt long; and to deliver himself from it the sooner, he referred all Lefevre had said to *insanity*.

Meanwhile he and Lefevre's uncle were relieved from the strangeness of a sick room, a place they scarcely ever visited, by the arrival of a physician. They had requested his attendance on their way, and now hastened to *give him his instructions*. They assured him that the patient's complaints, whatever they were, were brought on by strange religious notions. That he had the misfortune to get acquainted with some methodistical people, who had bewildered his head; and that there was no hope for him, unless he were separated from them.

Thus prepossessed, the worthy practitioner found little difficulty in deciding on the disease—it was *religious frenzy*. The remedy was to correspond with this predication. In addition to a medicinal prescription, he was to be kept quiet, and not to see *anybody*, (that is, as was understood by the parties, not anybody of a *certain*

character,)—all methodistical books were to be put from his sight—his attention was to be diverted wholly, if possible, from religion—and, as the fever should subside, he was to be entertained with cheerful company, and worldly amusements.

Supported by such authority, the uncle (Mr. Perry) resolved immediately on his measures. He saw no way of fulfilling the physician's directions, as Lefevre was now circumstanced; he, therefore, determined to carry him to his own residence. That residence was a tavern in the neighbourhood of the city; a place not well suited, it must be confessed, to an invalid. But Mr. Perry was never troubled with any little scruples of delicacy. He was a man of rough manners, gross perceptions, and positive opinions. If people saw with him, why they were right and good for something; if they did not, they were fools, and he could not help it. His intentions, however, were generally honest; and, if he now resolved on removing his nephew, he did it in kindness, and for his welfare. He had a sort of natural antipathy to *methodists,*

(so he called without exception, all who showed any concern for religion,) for which he could not account, and which he was willing to cherish. He was sure no good could come where they were, and he rejoiced in his heart, that he should be able to foil them.

Accordingly his purpose was announced in the spirit which conceived it. Lefevre had relapsed into insensibility, and could offer no opposition. Douglas, knowing his sentiments towards his uncle, ventured to remonstrate, as far as he could, when the claims of relationship were interposed; but it affected Mr. Perry, as the most rational remonstrance always affected him, when he had once spoken his mind,—it only transformed his resolution to obstinacy. He was pleased, indeed, rather than otherwise, to know the step would inflict the vexation he desired; and, without loss of time, he and Wallis conveyed the unresisting, unhappy Lefevre, from his own apartments to those of his relative.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THUS separated from his friends, Lefevre passed two days almost in solitude. Those who had been most associated with him in folly, seemed to forget his very existence. Wallis had been content to send a servant to inquire after his health; and his uncle satisfied himself, with procuring the best advice, and ordering the best nourishment for him. This was truly as much as might be expected from such a person. He was a *merry fellow* and a *bon vivant*; how could he bear to be confined with the sick? Besides, he had the same *antipathy* to a sick-chamber, as he had to all *methodism;* and very possibly it sprang from the same causes.

Lefevre's religious friends would still have supplied the deficiencies of his worldly connections; but their efforts were unavailing. Mrs. Russell had called, and was not asked to see him. Douglas had been,

but was assured he was asleep; and Lefevre remained without any knowledge of their kindness. His bodily health, however, was improving. A right application of medicine had brought rest to his exhausted frame; and rest was succeeded by a considerable diminution of fever. The consequences might have been most happy, had a judicious christian friend been at hand, to divert his attention from himself, and occasionally hold up to him "the hope of the gospel." As it was, his thoughts preyed upon themselves. He pronounced the name of Douglas—but it was when there was none to hear. From a wish to withhold his wretchedness from the cold curiosity of unsympathizing attendants, it accumulated upon him; and he was sinking sensibly, from the violent expression of it, into soul-consuming melancholy.

The afternoon of the third day, however, brought his mother to town as his comforter. She had received a hastily written letter, stating generally, that her son was dangerously ill, without any explanatory detail. Here was room for ima-

gination to work; and Mrs. Lefevre's had wrought upon her to agony, before she reached the end of her journey. How did her maternal bosom swell as the hackney carriage, which bore her from the inn to her brother's, stopt at his door! Without dismissing it, she sprang into the bar-parlour, and exclaimed—'Is he alive?'—and then sank into a chair, trembling to hear the answer to a question she was so eager to put.

'Don't be uneasy,' said the brother, taking her hand, and supporting her, 'he is alive!'

'Oh!—Thank God!' she cried, hysterically. She could ask nor hear any more. Her feelings had all flowed some hours in one direction; they were now suddenly thrown back into an opposite one. The change was too violent—she fainted under it.

The application of the common means soon restored Mrs. Lefevre from her swoon. With her first thought returned the name of her son. 'He is alive!—How is he?' said she.

'O, yes,' returned the brother, 'he's alive and doing well. He's been doing well enough since I took him in hand. Poor fellow!—he was as mad as a March hare, when I found him tormented by those canting, psalm-singing methodists—Not half so bad, now—He'll soon be right again, I'll warrant.'

'Thank God!' exclaimed the grateful mother, springing from her seat. 'Let me see him?'

'Follow me,' said the straight-forward brother, and immediately he led the way to the staircase.

It had been well if, in Lefevre's weak state, they had thought of apprizing him of his mother's arrival, prior to the interview; but the uncle, in the eagerness to show off his recovering nephew, and the mother, in her impatience to embrace her beloved son, forgot what was due to his tender system. It did not matter. With high, but with varying emotions, they entered the room —*Lefevre was not there!*

Mr. Perry stood like a statue one minute; the next he exclaimed, 'Bless

me!' in a tone of confusion and astonishment.

'Mr. Perry! what do you mean? cried Mrs. Lefevre, coloring with anger. She knew he loved a trick, and the thought shot through her mind, that he was now resolved to have sport, when he ought to exercise compassion.

This challenge to an explanation confounded him still more. 'What do I mean?' said he, 'What do I mean? Rabbet me! if I know what I mean—It's 'mazing odd!' looking round the room as he spoke.

'Mr. Perry,' she resumed, 'you know where Charles is! Where is he? I must not be trifled with!'

'This is strange enough!' he cried. 'Where is he? that's what I want to know. Upon my honor I don't know where he is.'

Mrs. Lefevre's eye dwelt on his face as he uttered this. She felt he spoke *seriously*. In her turn, she stood motionless, under the arrest of new and uncertain apprehension; and then ran from the chamber to other parts of the house,

in search of him, not knowing whither she went. Every place, likely and unlikely, was examined; but nothing could be seen of him. Every servant was catechised; but nothing could be heard of him: except, that his attendant stated, he had talked in the morning of trying to walk on the bridge, but that she had seen him long since dinner.

Messengers were now despatched to the bridge—he was not to be found there. Again they were hurried to his friends, who resided about the Metropolis — nothing could be ascertained. The night shut in, but he came not—the evening wore away, but it bore no tidings of Lefevre. The whole family was thrown into the greatest confusion.

But, who shall describe the feelings of his mother!—After she had satisfied herself that he was not in the house, she would have run abroad to seek him. When restrained from this, she sank exhausted to the ground, beneath the pressure of sorrow. She prayed that the servants might go every where in search of him; and, as

each one returned without intelligence, a fresh dagger pierced her bleeding heart. Hour after hour she sat gazing with her weeping eyes at the window, to catch the familiar features; till night made all outward objects alike invisible. As time grew late she was compelled to give up the dear hope of seeing him; and her suspense fled to another subject equally fruitful in anguish—'*where was he?*' Perhaps, weak as he was, he had fainted in the street. Perhaps, a fit of mental disorder had seized him, and he was straying he knew not where. Perhaps he had—— she had connected his speaking of the bridge with the water—but she dared not express her fears, even to herself. That night she thought not of rest. Long she sat, after the family, with her ear bent to the house-door, longing for the lingering knock; and listening, in every passing step, for the well known tread of her dear Charles. Hope sickened; and she betook herself to the chamber he had left, alternately, sitting in *his* chair, and resting her aching head on *his* table; or pacing the room in

distraction, and then throwing her wearied body on *his* bed for relief. Solitary and awful were the feelings of her soul—the pictures of her imagination that night! Now she saw him dropping in the street faint and insensible, without an acquaintance at hand, to restore him to his mother. Then she saw him, under a paroxysm of derangement, running wild from place to place, exposed to damp and darkness, and unaware of the thousand dangers that beset his path. Then, again, in defiance of her, her imagination pictured him leaping desperately from the balustrades of the bridge—falling through the air—sinking in the river—rising, then sinking—rising, then sinking—till she shrieked with horror, as she seemed to hear the last gurgling of the waters over the head of her only child!

The next day the efforts of the family were renewed, but with as little success. They could not trace him a yard beyond their own dwelling! As a forlorn hope, the uncle now sent advertisements to the papers, and bills to the principal post-offices, descriptive of Lefevre's person, and

proposing a reward on receiving any certain intelligence of him.

But, *what was become of Lefevre?* Looking on his situation as a sort of lonely imprisonment; shrinking from an obligation to a relative he never liked; and stimulated by that restlessness, which was gendered by his disease, and strengthened by concealment; he had resolved to leave the house. He, at first, proposed to start in the morning, and had carelessly alluded to his walking on the bridge to open the way; but, as the servant immediately said something about the necessity of an attendant, he apparently relinquished the design. The design, however, was only postponed. It occured to him, that in the busy part of the afternoon, when so many persons were entering and departing, he might pass without being observed. The experiment was made, and succeeded to his wishes; it was a full hour after his departure when he was first missed by his uncle and mother. Trembling with feebleness and apprehension, he hurried through the adjoining streets, without having resolved to what

point to direct his way. At length, he found himself near the Bricklayer's Arms, in the Deptford Road. Relieved from the fear of instant detection, his spirits fell under the weight of exertion so unequal to his strength, and a faintness ran over his whole body. Dreading alike to fall insensible into the arms of strangers, or to remain long in so public and near a situation, he entered the house, and took a glass of wine, the only *voluntary* refreshment, that had passed his lips since the day he visited Douglas, Revived by this seasonable cordial, he was leaving the seat, on which he had sought rest—still without an object before him. All places were alike to him, provided they protected him from the search of his friends, and hid him from the face of man! A stage for Chatham drove up at the moment; and, without deliberation, he took his place on it, as the readiest means of accomplishing his desire.

Late in the night the carriage reached Chatham, Lefevre entered, without concern, the Inn at which it finally stopt. He wanted a bed; but he could not ask a bed

without taking a supper. It was ordered, and, having scarcely tasted it, he gladly ascended to his chamber; and, too much exhausted to disencumber himself of his clothes, he laid on his couch and sunk to sleep.

In the morning he arose from slumbers longer and more exhilirating, than any he had known for many—many nights. He would have foregone breakfast, but at an Inn there was no option. It came; and when it was before him, he was tempted to partake of it slightly. His account was then to be settled, as he meant to leave the house. How surprised was he to find, that he had not sufficient money about him to discharge it! In no other circumstances would he have thought of money; but now he was a prisoner for the want of it. 'What could he do?' He recollected his watch, and concluded on pledging it. With this design, he was hastening into the street. His haste excited the suspicions of the vigilant mistress. She ran up to him as he reached the door, and tapping him on the arm, said—'Excuse me

Sir!—but you hav'n't settled your reckoning.'

Lefevre shrunk from her touch, and turning round looked chagrined, but knew not what to say, 'I—I shall be back in a few minutes,' he stammered out.

'Is it not convenient *now* Sir?' pursued the landlady.

Lefevre was roused. His anger was kindled at suspicion he could never endure; and, with an honesty of manner peculiar to him, he cried—'What, am I not to be trusted? Do you insult me?'

'By no means,' said the subdued lady, thinking it better after all, to risk a trifle, than offend she knew not whom. 'But you must be aware, we are subject to great impositions. Suspect you! No one will suspect you, Sir, who once looks in your face—an honester one I've never seen, I must say. But, as you had called for your bill, and had said, you wanted nothing more, I thought it would have pleased you to settle it—It 'ill be quite as well when you come in, Sir! Hope no offence, Sir!'

Vexed as Lefevre was by this officious

assault, he felt satisfaction in being suffered to go before payment was required; as the requisition would have been impracticable. Soon did he re-appear; and, redeeming himself from obligation, hastened to escape from the dwellings of humanity.

The exercises of the last sixteen hours had benefitted Lefevre's bodily powers, and they had been, in a certain way, advantageous to his mind. His desire to avoid pursuit, had divided his attention; and his compelled notice of the realities of life, had sobered his imagination. The delirium of fever had passed away; and, with it, the unconstrained and violent expression of the passions had subsided. This, however, was the whole amount of the improvement. It was merely *superficial.* All within was dark, stormy and ominous. Like the ocean lashed by all the winds of heaven, Lefevre's passions had been wrought up to an impetuous expression of emotions, which had become intolerable; and like the same awful element, having vented their rage, they now rolled and

swelled with inward and hollow sounds, far less noisy, but much more dangerous and terrible.

Thus silent, but restless, Lefevre went forth from the busy town. Where was he to go?—What was he to do?—were questions, that did not occur to him. He merely wished to escape the inquisitive eye—the impertinent question—the objects and concerns of a world, which had ruined him, which he loathed, and from which he felt he was severed for ever. In a word, he sought solitude. But solitude was not made for man; much less for the *guilty*. There grows the nightshade; there live the scorpion and the serpent; there dwell the beasts of prey 'going about seeking whom they may devour;' and there are found the syrens of a lower world, decoying the reckless wanderer to his own destruction. Lefevre should have sought in the sanctuary of friendship, the medium between desolate solitude, and worldly tumult; but he had yet much to learn. The means he once more adopted for his relief, were such as would provoke his

distemper; and, as he wandered carelessly away over hill and valley, to the eye of a compassionate spectator, he appeared as though he were 'going out into the wilderness to be tempted.'

Long—long he wandered, thoughtless of place—of time—of appetite—of fatigue. At length, he was impeded in his course, by suddenly coming down on the margin of a considerable river. A fine old tree stood close beside him; and, spent with exertion, he threw himself beneath its refreshing shade.

The prospect around him was pleasing. The river, in one direction, ran and winded, as far as the eye could see; and in the other, was, at about half a mile from the spot, decorated with a well formed bridge, which was animated by the foot of industry, and the rumbling of carriages. The arms of the bridge united the dwellings and inhabitants of two populous towns; while its elliptic arches presented in fine perspective, the cottages, meadows, and hills, which rested in the distance. On one hand, the hills again arose in larger and

bolder form, clothed with a verdure that might have deceived one into spring. On the other hand, appeared, on a pretty eminence, the tower of a church, rendered beautiful, by being encircled with elm trees; respectable, by standing connected with the remains of an old baronial castle; and awful, by having at its feet the tomb of our fathers, and our fathers' fathers. On the whole scene the sun now shone with a living brightness. Nature had shed her dews profusely on the face of the earth, as if to hide the nakedness of autumn; and now they glittered on every object, with a crystal, silvery light.

But what were delightful prospects to Lefevre! If his eye strayed over the scenery, it was unconsciously and for a moment; and, if it had any effect upon him, it was without effort or comparison. Its gaiety and cheerfulness insensibly seemed to put him farther from happiness; and to deepen the darkness of his soul. There was but one object that could secure his attention, and on that it was fixed —*it was the river!* His eyes rose and fell

upon its waters, so as to indicate a spirit under the changing sway of anguish, fear, and desperation. For some minutes, he had sat as still as the tree beneath which he rested, and then, with a low voice, as if opposing some objections, said—'Why should I live?' My life is a curse to myself and to others. I know I am lost and must die—Why should I live? If I were dead, I should know what I have to suffer. My punishment is just—I allow it; why may I not *seek* it?' To this, a voice within him replied,—That though the sentence were just, he was not authorized to take the execution of it into his own hands—that the Author of life alone, has the right of disposing of life—and that to touch his own life would only be to add to his other transgressions the heinous one of self-destruction.

Lefevre, with all his waywardness, was not willing to add to his offences, and he had no argument to oppose to these suggestions; yet the tempter was busy in his soul. As he was silently revolving the perilous subject, and his reason and pas-

sion held doubtful conflict, a sheep belonging to a flock feeding near him, ventured from the circle; and, coming within a few yards of him, stood looking in his face. Lefevre's attention was called up. Dumb as the animal was, its features spoke it innocent and happy. He could not look upon it—it touched his heart! 'I was once,' thought he, '*like it*—what am I *now!*' He turned away his head, rose from the ground, and began to walk from a spot so ensnaring to him.

The tempter does not always expect immediate success to attend the temptation he offers. An alarming object must be reconciled to the sight, by frequent presentation, before it can be embraced. Lefevre's mind had been happily diverted from itself, in a moment of great danger; but the subject on which it dwelt was by no means dismissed. On the contrary, he returned to it directly—balanced it in his thoughts with an avidity he could have experienced on nothing else—and often rose to a tone of confidence, in deciding against doing an injury to his own person. This did

not signify. His enemy had gained *one* point, perhaps the only one he proposed at this time—he had *familiarized* his thoughts to the act, by the very *consideration* of it. The hour of close assault was to come.

The day, for the season of the year, had been remarkably fine and warm; and the evening partook of its nature. Lefevre had rambled about till, as the sun was declining, he came in view once more of the river; but at a distance of about five miles from the spot, to which a reference has already been made. The feelings, with which he had gazed upon it in the morning, powerfully revived within him; and he was, alas! too well prepared to indulge them with, at least, diminished horror. He advanced to the side of it. A bank had been made, several yards in length, for facilitating the conveyance of chalk and flint to the vessels; it was now in disuse, and covered with grass, except where a few calcarious stones were seen. The side to the water rose perpendicular about four feet above the surface, and descended several

feet below it. To this elevation Lefevre ascended. He walked to and fro, agitated with those throes of passion which, by the torment they gave, biassed his mind to the sinister resolution. Weary of action and weary of life, he sat himself on the stones at the very verge of the river. This was the moment of trial! The night had come on. Obscurity had fallen on every thing but the waters; on them the moon beams played with most fascinating sweetness. Lefevre's frame was heated with fever and exercise; no breeze was stirring to invigorate it; the river alone looked cool and refreshing, and seemed inviting him to its very bosom.—He listened—not a sound was to be heard. He looked round—not a living creature was to be seen. His purpose strengthened—he started on his feet. His spirit shuddered with horror—not at the leap to the waters—but at the idea of rushing into the presence of the Great God he had offended! He walked about in agitation—sat down again. He postponed a purpose which he had not power either to break or fulfil—he would do it when the

tide came to a certain height. His aching eye hung over the bank, watching the awful progress of the rippling waters. Now they ran over the stone, which was to fill up the measure of his time—but they sank again! The blood fell back to his heart, and the sweat drops sprang on his forehead! Now again the little waves ripple over the mark—and—subside no more! He rises from his seat for the last time! He starts to see a person in the path which ran along the bottom of the bank. He paused to get the stranger out of sight. This was not so readily done. He waited—and waited; and, at last concluding the intruder meant to watch him, he descended to the pathway, and left the place full of indignation.

Lefevre was not mistaken in thinking himself watched. The stranger was a person of benevolence and leisure. He had been walking and reading on the side of the river, as was his custom. On returning towards his home, he sought rest a few moments on the stump of a tree, at some distance from the bank. As he was

sitting here, Lefevre came in sight; while the branches of a small thicket concealed him from Lefevre. There was something in his manner, which stirred suspicion in the heart of the stranger; and instantly he resolved not to leave the spot, while he remained. As the night approached, and Lefevre seemed ripening in his purpose, he began to walk slowly along the path with his book under his arm, as in meditation; concluding that he should certainly be observed. To his surprise, however, he had ventured by the foot of the bank, and, so fully was the attention of Lefevre absorbed, he was unheard—unseen. He now was returning with the design of speaking, should it be necessary, when his moving person met Lefevre's eye, and frustrated a purpose that might have been fulfilled, but for such an intervention. Thus possible is it for the benevolent mind, that seizes occasions of doing good, to bless and save a fellow-creature, without speaking a word, or expending a shilling!

Lefevre, for such a striking interposi-

tion of Providence, felt no gratitude—no joy. Fretted and mortified, he moved slowly towards the dwellings of man; and, on reaching Brompton, he entered the first inn he saw capable of giving him lodging. Quickly he sought his chamber, and realized, in frightful dreams, what he had happily failed to realize during his waking hours.

The following day, as Lefevre was about to call for his little bill, and hasten away, the master of the house entered the room uncalled, followed by a sharp lad about the age of fourteen. With a self-important air his eyes wandered over Lefevre's person, and then fixed themselves impudently on his face. Lefevre raised his upon him, with a look of piercing displeasure. But the saucy publican, far from being dashed, proceeded calmly to examine the features thus exhibited to him.

'What do you mean, Sir?' exclaimed Lefevre, fired by that jealousy of insult which commonly attends the fallen.

'May I be so bold, Sir, as to ask you your name?' said the publican, without answering the question.

'No, Sir, you may not!' replied Lefevre sharply.

'Hum!' said the publican, 'that's odd enough! An honest man may tell his name to all the world, as I do'—pointing to his sign which was creaking over the door.

'Sir, I will suffer no insolence,' returned Lefevre, taking up his hat.—'Tell me what I have to pay you.'

'Bobs!' resumed the landlord, 'I mean no offence, Sir—so you need not be so testy.—But pray mightn't you have come from Lon'on about a couple of days ago?'

'Let me know what I have to pay you, Sir!' cried Lefevre, choked with indignation.

'Heyday!' said the publican carelessly. Then coming nearer, and presenting a paper he held in his hand, continued—'I only just wanted to judge whether this description belonged to you—but as you will answer me nothing, judge for yourself,' laying it on the table.

Lefevre cast his eyes upon it. It ran—

Missing,

A

Young Man,

Thirty years of age; five feet nine inches high; of florid complexion and large dark eyes;——————

————————————————

He read no more. A mist passed over his eyes, and confusion covered his face. The publican observed it—

'My boy,' said he, 'saw it stuck up at the Post Office, and a crowd of people looking at it. He would have it was you, and has wrote it all down here. And I must say, I'm of the boy's mind now. See it answers in every thing, even your dress,

Black coat & waistcoat, & grey pantaloons.

'And,' cried the boy, 'it says

The linen marked with C. L.

and see, here is a C. L.' holding up the

corner of Lefevre's silk handkerchief, which laid on the table.

'Sure enough, so it is, boy!' said the father. 'Why this is proof positive.'

'Let me know what I have to pay,' said Lefevre again, putting his handkerchief into his pocket, and retiring haughtily from a discussion which left him no room for any thing but humiliating confession.

'O certainly, Sir,' resumed the landlord, 'But if you mean by that, you are going away, I must make bold to tell you, you cannot leave this house.'

'Prevent me at your peril,' said Lefevre.

'Ha! peril be on me! but I will,' said the determined publican.

Lefevre moved towards the door. The publican put out his arm to prevent him, and continued calmly,—'Let us understand one another young man. I don't mean to hurt you, or insult you—no, no, but I think it my bounden duty to keep you, till your friends can be informed where you are. If you will stay quietly, we will do every thing to make you com-

fortable; if you will not, we must use means—for go you *sha'n't* till we've sent to Lon'on.'

The little room was now filling with persons, curious to know the subject of altercation. Lefevre could, at no time, bear the gaze of impertinence; and now, in such equivocal circumstances, it was intolerable. He made his passage through the crowd—gained his chamber—and, renouncing afresh all intercourse with human society, shut his door resentfully on the whole world; while the landlord instantly adopted means to prevent his escape, should he be disposed to attempt it.

This precaution, however, was unnecessary. Time was, when in such a situation, the exasperated spirit of Lefevre would have scorned all ordinary fastenings; but now a little child might watch him. His spirits, though not softened, were broken; and it was only when suddenly exposed to real or fancied provocation, that they rose and flashed with indignation, and then sunk again in powerless apathy. Melancholy was evidently preying on the

energies of his soul. He was becoming unconquerably averse from speech and motion; and, if he had a desire, it appeared to be merely, that he should be left alone. All this day he scarcely moved, and did not speak. He sat almost in the same posture, and gazed vacantly on one blank part of the partition which confined him. It was doubtless unpropitious to him, that he had fallen into such hands just at this stage of his complaint. His host, it must be allowed, acted towards him with honest intentions and general kindness; but without that gentle sympathy, which has often reached a desperate wound, after resisting remedies of more imposing name. Lefevre felt this; his disordered mind gave the worst coloring to his conduct; and, by poring on it, it helped to fix a conviction which had become almost indelible—that he was abhorred of God, and despised of all men!

CHAPTER XXIV.

EARLY the following day, Mr. Perry, with an attendant, arrived in post-chaise to claim his nephew, and bear him back to town. This duty he performed very much to his credit. Elate with joy at finding his relative, after so many apprehensions for his safety, he freely expressed his delight, and restrained himself from any thing like upbraiding. He was, however, a little mortified when he perceived, that he was rendering what he thought a very important service to one, who refused to offer the slightest acknowledgment.

Lefevre, indeed, was neither satisfied nor displeased with his arrival. He was ready to obey his bidding; but it was less from any inclination to move, than from a dislike to resistance. He passed from his chamber to the chaise without a look or a word; and went from the Inn at Brompton to his uncle's residence, nearly uncon-

scious of what was happening to him. Many a time did his uncle endeavour to rouse him to attention and speech; but finding no success, he turned away from him to his other companion. 'Well,' thought he, 'this is odd; but his mother will make him speak I'll be bound.'

The carriage stopt at the door. They alighted; and ascended to the room where Mrs. Lefevre was waiting to receive them. Her attentive ear heard them coming. She ran towards them. Her quick eye glanced on the features of her child to assure herself of his identity. ''Tis he! 'Tis he!' she exclaimed, embracing him. 'Mother!' cried Lefevre, with a faint voice, as his head sunk on her bosom. 'My son! My son!' she replied, falling on his neck and sobbing aloud.

Mrs. Lefevre struggled to suppress her emotions of joy, that she might be at liberty to utter them in free communion with her son. It was in vain; her son could not be induced to speak again. One word had burst from his heart on falling into the arms of a parent, who loved him so entirely,

and whom he had not seen for so long a period—but *it was all.*

Deep melancholy had been gradually preying upon Lefevre, and her dominion seemed now complete. He became more like the statue of a man, than a man himself. Hour after hour he would retain the same seat, and even the same attitude, without any sense of fatigue; as in sleep we retain a posture free from uneasiness. which would have been insupportable had we been awake to our situation. The features of his face were fixed in one unchanged expression; knowing no variation but the occasional muttering of the lips, which yet emitted no articulate sounds. He noticed nothing—he wished for nothing—he showed feeling at nothing; except when attempts were made to disturb him. The servants, and even the very animals of the house, in time, passed to and from his room, as though it were unoccupied; and, if any regard was paid to it, it was such a regard as we pay to a place where death has entered, and not where a living inhabitant is found. In a word, Lefevre

appeared to have lost all *volition.* He was like a fine machine, perfect in all its parts; but, from the fracture of the grand spring, incapable of all motion, except by extrinsic excitement. With all this apparent insensibility, however, to a careful observer; there was an indefinable something about Lefevre, which indicated—not only feeling—but feeling compressed and agonizing. The rebellious passions had ceased their violent struggles in the outworks, but they were now sapping the very citadel. A cold, stony indifference had placed its deathy form on all his faculties; but upon the whole of that form might be seen the worm of anguish, silently, but rapaciously, feeding on the very seat of vitality!

Nothing can readily be imagined more afflicting to an affectionate mother, than to be called to attend, day after day, a child in such a situation. She soothed him—she caressed him—she entreated him—she prayed for him—she wept over him—but nothing availed—it was like rain falling on the rock. The most that, by all her efforts she could extort from him was an unwel-

come 'Leave me! leave me!'—and all the notice for some days which he took of any thing, distinct from his slight refreshments, was to put a small testament in his pocket, which laid on the table. The book was one he had given to Caroline. His mother had found it amongst his things, and had placed it in his way, hoping he might look into it. In this particular she was disappointed; yet, that mother alone, who has watched day and night over a child in a similar state, can conceive the pleasure this simple act afforded; as it was the *only voluntary one* she had witnessed.

Lefevre's uncle was, perhaps, almost as much affected as his mother, although in a different manner. She felt undoubtedly from affectionate concern; but he felt much more from wounded pride. It was the unhappiness of Mr. Perry, that he could give no quarter to any one who resisted his will. Now, it had been his will, that Lefevre should walk abroad, see company, shuffle cards, read plays, go to the theatre, and wholly forget whatever related to religion; but, although, his will

had been formally made known, and frequently insisted upon, it was to his dismay entirely inefficient. Sometimes, vexation mingling with hope, would carry him to Lefevre, and urge him to compliance. He would then address him in alternate fits of kindness and anger; and, pressing him from his seat, oblige him to walk the room, or compel him to an airing in a carriage. At other times, vexation leagued with disappointment, would hurry him from his presence, pronouncing his disease a whim—his temper obstinate—his heart ungrateful—his religion hypocrisy.

It must be granted that, how well-intentioned soever, this treatment, it was on the whole of no promising description. Lefevre wanted those noiseless, delicate, unobtrusive attentions which appear careless of the object, they are most anxiously watching. It was well his thoughts should be called off from himself; but it should have been done, not in defiance or neglect of his humour, but by making his humour insensibly a party to the design. By such patient efforts he

might have been recovered to confidence and conversation; and in the absence of them, he waxed as much worse as his desperate state would allow. His mother's overwrought feeling and unsubdued kindness, only deepened his dissatisfaction with himself, since he could make her no return; while the rough and forceful conduct of his uncle, only converted dislike into fixed antipathy.

Mrs. Lefevre had throughout desired, that his old friend Douglas should see her son; and, now, that all their efforts were baffled, she pressed her desires with an earnestness, which indicated too great a reliance on the issue of such an interview. The uncle, however, yielded so far as to allow her 'to do as she pleased.'

In a day or two Douglas called to enquire after his friend, and was requested to see him. The request surprised and pleased him; and he immediately followed Mrs. Lefevre to his room.

What a picture was presented to him! The day was bright and cheerful, but all here was dark and distressing. A piece

of thick green baize had been hung over a large window by the hand of one, who might be supposed to say——

'Sun! how I hate thy beams;'

while, from its unfitness to answer the end, the rays of light streamed in round its sides, so as to render the gloom heavy and visible. In the centre of this gloom sat Lefevre, as though loving the darkness he had created. His body was bent; his legs crossed; his elbow rested on the table; and his hand supported his forehead, so as to cover his face as much as possible. How changed was that face! The eye, once so quick and gay, now fell motionless on the ground; and the cheek, once florid with the mantling blood of health, was sunken and sallow. But, the *expression!*—how shall it be described? It was of one simple character; but every passion which is hostile to the peace of man, seemed to have contributed to its formation. And, as though the fullest effect were to be given to the scene, Lefevre sat with his back to the light, and his face to the fire;

and it was only, at one time, by the bickering and smoky flame, and, at another, by the lurid glare of heated coal, that his features could be discriminated. The whole apparition instantaneously reminded Douglas of some of Fuseli's unearthly conceptions; but, with this sense of his present condition, he associated a recollection of the height from which he had fallen.

'Sorrow is a sacred thing.' And that sorrow that lies deep in the heart—that breathes no sigh—sheds no tear—utters no complaint, is wonderfully affecting. Douglas never felt more respect mix with his pity, than at this period of Lefevre's uttermost distress. With the delicacy of Job's friends, a delicacy he had often admired, he sat down without saying a word to sympathize with him in silence. Profound was the stillness that prevailed for many minutes. Lefevre seemed moved by his quiet and respectful sympathy; and appeared desirous of noticing it, in proportion as it retreated from notice and expression. He half raised his eyes in an effort to look on him; but they fell under him

again. This rejoiced Douglas; and he was waiting for the second effort, expecting it to be successful, when Mrs. Lefevre broke the silence. She did not fully comprehend that communion of spirits which subsists, not only without words, but in scorn of them; and she was uneasy that he did not *talk* to her son.

'Charles!' said she, 'here is Mr. Douglas, you'll speak to him, won't you?'

Lefevre evidently shrunk from this overture, and Douglas scarcely knowing how to act, said—'Charles! I am concerned to see you so unwell.'

He spoke not.

'If my speaking,' Douglas continued, 'is painful to you, only raise your hand, and I will desist altogether.'

The hand was not raised. Douglas was encouraged—'There is hope, Charles!' said he.

Lefevre shook his head slightly.

'O yes, I do assure you there is hope! For the vilest returning sinner there is hope! The tempter may incline you to think otherwise, but remember he is "the

father of *lies*." He is always tempting us either to presume or despair.'

He was silent. Douglas alluded at intervals to the inviting language of Scripture.

'The Redeemer has said, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

* * * * * * * * *

'God has put words into the mouth of the backslider—"Take with you words and turn unto the Lord, and say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously."

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"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he *will* have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he *will abundantly pardon.*"

* * * * * * * * *

'God has graciously assured us "that he has no pleasure in the death of a sin-

ner, but rather that he should turn unto him and live." And he condescends to expostulate with us—"*O why will ye die!*" Do not such scriptures afford you encouragement?"

Again he shook his head.

'O Charles,' continued Douglas much affected—'do not cast away hope. Think of what you are doing. The mercy of God is unbounded; the merit of the Saviour is infinite; the agency of the Spirit is almighty:—to suppose then, that their influence cannot reach you, is to dishonor God in a point where he is most jealous of his glory. Surely you would not wish this?'

His frame seemed to shudder at the suggestion.

'Then do not reject all hope!' resumed Douglas. 'Look to Him who looked with pity on his enemies—his murderers—who looks with pity on *you!*'

'Do, Charles, do!' said his mother. 'Take comfort I entreat you!'

'For your own sake—for the sake of your friends,' continued Douglas.

'For *my* sake—for your *mother's* sake!' cried Mrs. Lefevre, seizing his passive hand, and kissing it. 'O Charles, my dear Charles, take comfort! Are you not my hope—my joy? Do I not live for you only? O Charles, pity your poor distracted mother!—Speak to us Charles! Tell us *you* will take comfort—that will comfort *us!*'

'Leave me! leave me!' said Lefevre, gently pressing her away.

'*Leave me! leave me!*' exclaimed the anguished mother. 'O Mr. Douglas! if I beg of him to speak to me, he says, Leave me, Leave me! I have heard nothing from his lips these four days but Leave me, Leave me. Cruel words! Cruel child! —he knows I cannot leave him! "Can a mother forsake her child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, Mr. Douglas?'

She walked the room in great distress.

'Madam, I beseech you be composed,' said Douglas.

'*Leave me! Leave me!* I do every

thing to comfort him, and he says—Leave me! Cruel!'—Still walking the room and clasping her hands.

'Mother, I am not cruel,' said Lefevre, with an agitated voice.

She started. She did not hope to hear him speak. Her affections took a new turn, and running to him, she said—'Cruel! Did I say you were cruel? No, you are not cruel! Dear patient sufferer! you are not cruel! forgive me!—Only don't bid me *leave you.* I cannot bear that word'—and she alternately wept on his face, and dried up her tears with her lips.

She continued uttering her affection in broken sentences. Lefevre spoke not again, however, as she hoped; and was evidently distressed at her excess of feeling. Douglas saw no other way of relieving him than by proposing to depart. Regretting that he could not have more private intercourse with his friend, he rose to leave, without troubling him with the notice of his departure, and Mrs. Lefevre followed him. As they entered an adjoining room, she exclaimed—'O, Mr. Doug-

las, is not Charles in a strange way? Am not I a most unhappy mother?' weeping afresh.

'Your trials are very severe ma'am.'

'Severe indeed! O, Mr. Douglas, I think I could have borne any thing but this!—I am a widow, and I shall be childless! Robert is gone, and I shall lose poor Charles! My life has been full of troubles!'

'Life is troublous to the best of us, ma'am. In this world God designs our *improvement* rather than our *happiness*; and, if our troubles only prepare us for eternal felicity, we shall in the end, number them with our blessings!'

'Ah! Mr. Douglas, but it's cutting—very cutting—I fear I shall never be able to endure it!'

'It is, ma'am; but the promise secures strength equal to the burden. And,' continued Douglas, 'I think it is too much for you to be continually with your son. If some other——'

'O no,' she interrupted, 'I cannot leave him. Who can watch him like a

mother?—who can do for him like a mother?—who can feel for him like his mother? Dear child! I cannot leave him! Want what he will, he asks for nothing – and none could tell his wants but his mother!'

'But then, ma'am, the sight of him grieves you, and your grief distresses him!'

'But one must be a stone not to grieve,' she cried. If he would but speak—would but look at me—I think I should be comforted. But when I sit day and night with him, and see him so wretched, and no word—no look,—I pore upon his face, and think of what he was, and almost forgetting myself, I say,—"Can this be Charles!"'

'Indeed it is too much for an affectionate mother!' said Douglas, with great sympathy.

'But,' she resumed, 'if I were not always with him, his uncle would take it up, and he would be strict and harsh with him. He calls it all *nonsense* and *fancy;* and says he should be scolded and driven out of it.'

'That's a fatal mistake, ma'am,' re-

plied Douglas. 'It is neither——' he paused. He knew not what to say. He felt that if he expressed his sentiments, he should have to protest against the uncle, and would hardly please the mother. Propriety restrained him. Full of pity for an excellent parent, he took his leave of her; promising to renew his visit in three or four days, and hoping it might be still more propitious.

Soon after Douglas's departure, Mr. Perry visited Lefevre. He made some free remarks on Douglas; and, in his violent way, insisted that he should ride out with him. Persecution will make a wise man mad. Agitated by what had already occurred, and chafed at the behaviour of his uncle, Lefevre formed his purpose—he would once more escape.

The next day he himself proposed a walk. This rejoiced his friends, and his uncle especially, as he contended that this improvement, as he called it, was his own work, and he cheerfully became his companion.

The second day he renewed his walk;

and, to prevent any suspicion, he took his nephew with him, a lad about ten years old. When he had got some distance from home, he went into a confectioner's, and treated the child; directing him to stay a minute for him, while he called somewhere else, and then disappeared from the spot for ever. The lad waited obediently minute after minute, and even hour after hour; and then hastened home in distress to tell of his uncle's desertion.

The former elopement of Lefevre led his relatives immediately to the truth; and the family was once more thrown into disorder. It was, however, a confusion unlike the former. Mr. Perry, unable to sympathize with him under the effects of his peculiar sufferings, scrupled not in his anger to call him unthankful and unfeeling; and declared he 'would not pass the threshold to seek him again.'

The first impressions on Mrs. Lefevre too, were mingled with reproach and crimination, though she could not bear to hear them from other lips than her own. Unhappy mother! her cup of suffering was

now full; and she was called to drink it, at a moment when her frame was exhausted by previous anxieties, and almost sleepless vigilance. She laughed and sobbed—sobbed and laughed; and then swooned, and was carried to her chamber insensible to all things. Here her grief continued so to fill her soul, and agitate her reason, that she had not power to think of the probable means for the recovery of her son. Fits of weeping, of silence, and of talkativeness, by turns seized her. Now she walked restless about the room, bitterly reflecting on her child 'for forsaking a mother, who would have gone with him over the face of the earth;' and as quickly apologizing for him, from the weight of his sorrows, and the influence of his disease. Then, she would sit down in profound stillness, and pore over the source of her troubles, till memory was bewildered; and confounding the past with the present, she would leave her seat to pay her son some little attentions, to which she had been accustomed. Then again, recalled to recollection by her own motion, she would smite her forehead

to find him absent, and fall back to her chair, to weep and sob hysterically. But words were never meant to utter the sorrows of a fond mother, who finds herself husbandless, childless, and hopeless, under circumstances the most afflictive possible.

The morning, however, raised her a little above the violence of her grief. Then came the workings of a torturing imagination—*where was Lefevre?* Then followed severe self-reproaches, for not having immediately adopted the means for his recovery. From these she was relieved by concluding, that her brother had done what she had forgotten; and, on finding he had not, she was so exasperated, that all her reproaches were diverted from herself to him. Last of all came the resolution, to use the means without delay. Into this resolution Mr. Perry entered, if not from real concern, yet from a desire to justify himself in the eyes of the world; and instantly all the former means were put in requisition.

The means employed did not avail. All that day nothing was heard of Lefevre, except that a young person had seen him

near Kensington. That night notices were issued to the different post-offices; and the next day Douglas, the Russells, and other friends, joined the relatives in the search; but still it was in vain. Other days and nights were spent in the same anxious enquiry, till all enquiry was nonplussed. At length, since with all their exertions, his path could not be tracked beyond the first afternoon, a *nameless fear* took possession of the thoughts of his friends. Douglas was the principal exception to this; and, though he had his misgivings, he continued to hope, that the very listlessness which had seized him, might preserve Lefevre from injuring his own person.

While dubitation was subsiding into despondency, rumour took care to keep up the tortures of suspense. Letters were received from different places, in answer to the notices, containing such indistinct and general information, as only served to excite and confound expectation. And one man called on the advertiser, most confidently asserting, that he had seen a

person, exactly suiting the description given in the bill, walking melancholy and late in the evening, by the side of the New River. But, as he was rather of shabby appearance; and, as his account, on examination, was neither correct nor probable, it was concluded, that he had made up a story, with his eye on the reward.

When report had succeeded report, each one leaving the tantalized mind more suspicious to the truth of all report, a statement was sent up from a village in the North Riding of Yorkshire, which seemed to carry credibility with it. It stated, that a young man on foot tarried at the inn in that village three weeks ago. That he looked very ill when he came—that he spoke to no one—ate scarcely anything—and went early to bed. That he was taken much worse in the night—and died at six o'clock the next morning. That pains had been taken to find out his friends; but that all their endeavors had been fruitless; and he had, therefore, been buried sixteen days ago by the parish. And, finally, that in every particular there was a perfect agree-

ment between this person, and the printed description. This account was signed by the publican and medical attendant; and sent, in respectful and condoling terms, to the relatives of Lefevre.

This communication gave a degree of miserable satisfaction. To give more certainty to it, another letter was despatched, with some additional questions relative to his person, his dress, and the little articles that might have been about him.

The reply to this was courteously made by the professional gentleman. The part noticing his person confirmed the conviction, that it must have been Lefevre; while the remaining part neither destroyed nor strengthened confidence. His dress had been disposed of. Neither watch, nor pocket-book, nor money, was found upon him. A silk handkerchief was sent up, but it could not be recognised as his.

However, on the whole the evidence warranted the identification of Lefevre with the account. Mr. Perry acquiesced in it, and Mrs. Lefevre felt fully assured of it. Woeful were her sorrows at the thought of

her son's dying without a friend to soothe him, and receiving the last offices of kindness from the cold hand of charity; but they were not so insufferable as the rack of everlasting suspense. She sent off a sum adequate to cover the expence, which had been incurred on the occasion. She put on mourning, 'resolving never to take it off, nor to believe her son existed in the world, till she saw him with her own eyes;' and it was agreed between her and her brother, that, should nothing occur within a twelvemonth to alter their purpose, they would visit the distant spot, and see a tomb-stone erected over the ashes of Lefevre!

CHAPTER XXV.

LEFEVRE was not dead. Nor had he now, as formerly, any particular temptation to 'touch his life.' While, therefore, his relatives are left to weep over his grave; the reader, if not already wearied with his wanderings, must be content once more to trace his devious path 'in the land of the living.'

On leaving his little nephew, as has been mentioned, Lefevre hastened to free himself of the metropolis, in a direction the opposite to that he had before taken. This was soon accomplished; and, on coming near Kensington, he began to relax his pace, when suddenly his hand was seized by a youth he had not noticed. He started and frowned, expecting he was pursued, and resolving on resistance. But a smiling, grateful, well-known face instantly dispelled his alarm. It was the face of his protégé John Graham. He shook his hand

in silence, and moved to pass on. Young Graham still fixed an asking and anxious eye on him. Lefevre shrunk from it, and turned his face aside. Graham read its expression. He thought of the former elopement and exclaimed—'O Mr. Lefevre you are going—you are going to leave us!—You are not going to leave us again, are you?'

He spoke not; but endeavoured to disentangle himself from Graham's hold.

'O Sir,' continued Graham, 'you wo'n't leave us!' Pray don't leave us! What will Mr. Douglas do—what will your mother do?'

Lefevre could not endure these recollections, and, wresting his arm from the affectionate grasp of Graham, he went forward.

Graham's concern gave him courage. He renewed his hold, and pressed upon his arm, so as to check his course. 'O, Mr. Lefevre, if you are going—if you will go—let me go with you! I will go any where with you. If you are unhappy, I will comfort you. How much you have

done for me, and I have never been able to do any thing for you. Do let me go!' cried he, scarcely knowing, in his fears for Lefevre, what he said.

Lefevre was moved by his generosity; but, wishing to get rid of a parley which gave him such pain, he stopt suddenly, and looking angrily, said—'Go!—Go where sir?—Go *home* if you please,' pushing him from him.

'O, Mr. Lefevre,' said Graham, catching and shaking the hand that had repulsed him, 'do not be angry! I thought you loved me. And I only meant——but——' he could say no more for emotion, and the tear trembled in his eye.

'John,' said Lefevre with a hurried voice, 'I *do* love you! But leave me, leave me!'

So saying, he extricated himself for the last time, and turned down a by-street at the corner of which they had been standing. Graham remained on the spot irresolute. He did not like to quit his benefactor in circumstances, which made it dubious whether they should meet again; nor

did he wish to provoke him to anger by following him when forbidden. He continued thoughtful and motionless till Lefevre turned an angle at the bottom of the street and disappeared; then he ran to the corner to catch another sight of him; and at last with tardy steps made his way into town. They were, however, quickened as he felt the propriety of informing his uncle and mother where and when he had seen him.

Lefevre, after winding through a few back streets and lanes, came again into the high road, and conveyed himself to Staines by a passing stage coach. He dismounted before the carriage entered the town, and turning off from the road by a path that offered itself on the left hand, he went forth, like Cain, oppressed with a sense of guilt he could neither bear nor escape—a fugitive from the face of God and man.

The path Lefevre had chosen was one of those numerous ones, which traverse the dreary wastes of Bagshot Heath. He pursued it till he found himself not only

beyond the sight of every living thing, but of every human dwelling. He felt himself secure from discovery and molestation; and paused to look round him. The deep shades of night were enfolding all distant objects; and nothing was left to his eye, but the barren, unvarying, and apparently interminable heath. Twilight was rudely anticipated in her gentle offices, by the black and billowy clouds, which were deforming the fair face of heaven. A hollow wind moaned amongst the brushwood, which lay on the ground; as the spirit of the storm; interrupted only by the harsh notes of a few crows, which, warned of the gathering tempest, were speeding to their nests. There was something in this dark and desolate scenery that *sorted* with Lefevre's soul. He sympathized with it, but it was the sympathy of misery. He lifted his eye above him. It was long since he had done so. There was something in a clear blue sky too transparent for him; it seemed as though it would carry his eye to the throne of Deity, and he shrunk from it; but on this murky, novembral atmos-

phere, blackened by storm and by night, he could dare to look, as on a curtain that effectually concealed the pavilion of the Most High.

Fitful and fluctuating, however, were the desires of Lefevre. Thoughtlessly he had hastened into this waste to rest in solitude; but, as the blackness of night thickened around him; as the biting wind pierced his slight garments, and carried its chills to his very heart; and as the rain drops fell from the threatening firmament; he once more became insensibly desirous of approaching the habitations of man. He sought the path by which he had left the main road. He thought he had found it; but he was mistaken; it had nothing to distinguish it from the manifold tracks that crossed the waste. He hastened along it. It brought him to a centre where many ways met; but none of them exactly in its own direction. He knew not what to do! Incapable of judging on the right, he struck off into another, as an experiment. It led him to a similar conflux of paths. He hurried into another of these. It brought

him, as far as the prevailing darkness would allow him to judge, to the very spot on which he had first paused! Lost in the wandering mazes of the heath, he became hopeless of finding a covert from the tempest, and entered, with heartless steps, on the track that happened to lie nearest to him. The rain now fell heavy and close to the ground. He moved along in his way heedless of its influence, till his frame was benumbed and exhausted; then, observing a stone which appeared to mark the boundaries of some property, he sank down on the heath which had grown thick around it; and, resting his weary arms and aching head on its top, resigned himself patiently to 'the pelting of the pitiless storm.'

The path Lefevre had last chosen had brought him near the margin of the heath; but of this he was ignorant; and that night he had probably perished, had he not been protected by the gracious Hand he was striving to shun. It happened, that a woodman, who occupied a hovel not far from the spot where he rested, was detain-

ed an hour later than usual from his home; and, in returning, came necessarily close by Lefevre. Lefevre, on hearing the foot of man approach, remained still as the stone that supported him, expecting that he should be unnoticed. Happily, however, the quick eye of the woodman discovered him. The stone had by its color often served as a way-mark to him on a night like the present; and, as he was now searching through the darkness for it, he found it was concealed by some other object. He stopt in surprise to examine it; but could only ascertain that it was a man.

'Hem!' said he, clearing his voice, 'who be you?'

Lefevre raised his head and looked at him.

'Why, ye won't think of biding here, in this place, such a night as this?' continued the woodman.

'Where am I?' said Lefevre.

'Where be ye!' repeated the woodman, changing his voice to pity. 'What, be ye a stranger, and ha' lost yur way! Come, then wi' me, and cover ye in my

little cot a few throws off. You'll surely be welcome.'

'No'—replied Lefevre.

'Why then,' said the generous man, 'I must see ye over the moor.'

'No'—interrupted Lefevre.

'If to leave ye here alone, is what ye mean, why—I *can't* do that. You'd perish here such a night as this. How could I bide to think of a human creatur perishing at my door!—Come,' said he, putting his hand to Lefevre's arm, 'step into my place there. It's poor fare, but ye shall never find welcomer.'

'No'—said Lefevre again, as he moved unconsciously along. 'How far am I from a house, where I could stay for the night?'

'If it's a pot-house ye mean,' replied the woodman, 'a long mile and a bit. An' not a step of the way would ye find in this darkness—an' was it pure day light, you'd not find yur way, if ye be strange. So you'd best turn in to my humble place here,' and he gently pressed his arm forward.

Lefevre, still lingered and hesitated.

'Come!' resumed the woodman good-naturedly, 'don't let's be higgling here. 'Tis an ugly night. I never see worse rain than this, in all my born days (shrugging his shoulders) so you'd best turn in a bit. Here it is (pointing before him.) 'Tis a poor shed—but it may warm ye, and cover ye, and that's some'hat such a night (shrugging his shoulders again) and you're sure of a hearty welcome.'

Lefevre moved from the path in which he was urging him. The friendly man, however, still inclining him towards his home, said—'O, come, ye won't be nice to night. An' ye be a gentlemun, to warm ye and feed ye wull do ye good. An' mayhap, the stars may peep out, and the clouds blow over, in a bit o' time—An' then one may set ye in the way.'

In any common circumstances, Lefevre would have rejoiced in a spirit so kind and generous as this stranger displayed; but, now, it only affected him sufficiently to resign himself to so friendly a hand.

A few more paces brought them directly on the cottage. It stood in a small excavation, some yards from the public path-way; so that it shewed only its small brown roof to the passenger, and, in the light of day, would scarcely be taken for a dwelling. It was, now, only distinguished to Lefevre by the glimmerings of fire, that streamed through an ill-fitted door and window shutter, and piercing through the misty darkness, played on the opposite bank of the cavity. 'Take care ye don't slip,' said the careful guide, as they descended towards the door; and just afterwards he set his finger on the latchet, and threw it open.

A sweet scene was exhibited, as by the very touch of magic; and set, in a moment, in full contrast with the howlings of the wind—the dashing of the storm—and the blackness of the heavens, which surrounded it. A fine bright fire was snapping and sparkling on the hearth. A sturdy lad sat snug and happy in the ample chimney corner, watching the progress of the flame on the fuel, with a dog lounging

at his feet. Before it, at a little round table, sat the mother and the wife, neatly dressed, knitting a stocking; and beside her was seated a rosy-faced girl, reading Watts's Divine Songs aloud.

Small and rough was the furniture of the room, but every thing was clean—every thing was in its place; and this gave an air of comfort to the humble family, which we sometimes vainly seek in the abodes of magnificence. Barren as the heath appeared, it is surprising how much they made it contribute to their support. Of the heath their habitation was built—of the heath their fire was formed—of the heath their bedding was made—on the heath their little stock of poultry was fed: it seemed as though the hand of industry had power to extract, from the mere wastes of nature, sustenance, and life, and health.

It was evident that this little family were waiting in a state of preparation, to receive an absent member, who was the centre of their loves. Without any extravagance, so very nice was the order of every thing, you might have thought, that

the lamp had been just trimmed—that the mother's neckerchief had been adjusted for the last time—and that some extra turf had been cast on the fire, in reference to his expected arrival.

Accordingly, the instant the door was opened, every living thing down to the dog, was in motion; and the prattling girl, throwing down her book, ran to her usual embrace. But, on seeing a stranger with her father, her smiles faded, she fell back towards her mother, who had stopt in the middle of the room, wondering what could be the matter. 'Come in Sir,' said the woodman, as he led Lefevre over the threshold, 'though the place be unworthy of ye. Mayhap ye never see the like of it,' changing his address as the light revealed his respectable appearance to him.

Helpless, and almost lifeless, as Lefevre was evidently becoming, he conducted him across the room, and placed him in the corner which his son had just quitted.

'Poor gentlemun,' said he, looking on him, 'he's hardly sensible,' and then look-

ing round on his wife for her sympathy.

Her looks said, as plainly as looks could say, 'What can this be!'

'Aye, my dear Sally,' said he replying to her looks, 'let us not be unmindful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels,'

She looked as though she reverenced this sacred admonition; but still, casting an eye on Lefevre, and transferring it to her husband, she revealed a shrewdness that said, 'Surely this is not an *angel*— at least not a *good* angel.'

Notwithstanding this sharp reflection, it must not be concluded, that this worthy woman was really severe and hard-hearted. Lefevre's troubled and gloomy countenance, united with his indifference to every thing, had made her first impression an unfavourable one; but no sooner was a serious call made on her compassionate offices, than it was answered with all the readiness of good nature.

For a few moments only Lefevre was at all conscious of the pleasure of genial heat, returning to his benumbed and ex-

hausted frame. The transition was too sudden — too powerful; and he sank from his seat, into a state of total insensibility. No restorative could this cottage supply, but vinegar; and that was used without the desired effect. Alarm was excited by the continuance of this motionless stupor; and each member of the happy family evinced, in different ways, how easily it could pity a stranger in distress. The father bore him into the adjoining little chamber, and began to strip him of his drenched clothes; and the boy followed, insisting that he should have his bed, and that he would sit up and watch him. While the mother busied herself in preparing some excellent caudle for him, as the daughter stood by her weeping, she scarcely knew why.

The application of warm clothing, and the gentle and repeated use of warm drinks and simple cordials, produced the happiest result. Lefevre, before the hour of family rest, was recovered from death-like insensibility, and sunk into a heavy, but natural sleep.

Short were the hours, reviving the repose of that night to Lefevre. The first sounds to which he was in the least sensible, were to his half-opened senses so soft, so sweet, that he could scarcely tell whether he was listening to the song of earthly beings, or dreaming of the harpings of the heavenly world. His thoughts recovered themselves. He found himself on a poor, but warm pallet resting on the ground;—the sun was up in the heavens, rejoicing in his course;—the sky was so clear, so brilliant, that it seemed almost impossible it could be the very sky, which a few hours ago had been surcharged with rain, and given blackness to night. His ear, now, distinguished the sounds that had wakened him; they were those of the little family, raising, in suppressed voices, their morning hymn to their kind Preserver.

Lefevre rose; and dressing himself, passed into the family room. He was received with cheerful faces and kind expressions. No allusion was made to any trouble they had had on his account. You

would have thought his accommodation cost them nothing; although it was evident, in so small a dwelling, a stranger could not be entertained without inconvenience to all. Lefevre gave them thanks for their kindness; and, to avoid any explanation or discourse, he expressed a determination to leave immediately.

'Go now!' said the hospitable woodman, 'you'll surely not go forth here fasting. That's a sorry way to part with a stranger. Come, Sir, you'll honor us to sit down (putting a chair) and do as we do. There's no time lost in whetting the bill, Sir.'

Lefevre complied, and took the seat that had been placed by him. The breakfast table was comfortably provided; and the hostess soon began to distribute her supplies around her, shewing particular notice to her guest. Lefevre, to escape any unwelcome questions, forced as much ease into his manner and countenance as possible; but still remained uneasy at the thought of being urged to conversation.

'May be,' said the woodman as he

handed his tea, 'ye be from Lon'on?' And then, checking himself for the liberty, he added —'but mayhap ye wou'dn't wish to answer questions: and its no business o'ours.'

Lefevre did not reply to him; and he directly judged, with a delicacy that may often be found under the rough exterior of our cottagers, that he had rather be left in silence.

But Lefevre found in the youngest child, an enemy to his repose not so easily managed. She had for some time been endeavouring to gain his attention; and, not having succeeded to her wishes, without being positively discouraged, she ventured on bolder advances. She crept between his knees—looked piteously in his face—and kissed the hand, that occasionally rested on her shoulder. At length, to relieve himself of her observation, he lifted her on his knee. This was the very place to which she aspired. She looked round pleased on her parents; and presently after, looking with concern on him, said—'Ye won't keep out in the rain no more, will ye?'

Lefevre pressed his lips on her cheek to hide his looks and save reply.

She sat still, apparently noticing his silence, and then, looking sorrowfully in his face again, said — 'Yur heart isn't *breakt*, is it?' Her mother looked at her with rebuke, but she did not catch her eye, and she continued—'Mother said, she dare say it was *breakt*, and may be you'd no good mother to comfort ye, like me and George.'

Lefevre could not speak, the mischief was done. The father called the child away; and seated her securely on his knee, as the only remedy for the future; at the same time talking to his wife on some point of indifference. This respect to his feelings won upon Lefevre, and, on recovering himself, he remained in their society with less reluctance.

The repast being ended, Lefevre rose to depart. He felt some embarrassment in deciding how to treat the obligation under which he had been laid. There was something so free and noble in the behaviour of these people, that made it difficult to offer

pecuniary remuneration for their hospitality; yet, his unwillingness to lie under obligation, and his sense of justice to a poor family, disposed him to make the attempt. With the awkwardness which accompanies an action performed in such circumstances, he put his hand in his pocket, and taking out all the money he had—three shillings!—he quietly laid it down on the table, and, as he stood, held his hat over it.

The wife, however, observed him, and looked hurt. Her eye directed that of her husband's to the circumstance; and, with a look made up of independence and liberality, he pointed to the money and said —'No Sir,—no Sir,—that *can't* be. Have I found ye out, and begged ye to come in here, and *keept* ye here all night, to get the money from ye! No, Sir.—Do ye see these hands (stretching them out)—while they be able to provide for these (looking on his wife and children) I'll never think much of breaking my loaf, or giving my bed to a fellow creatur in distress!'

Lefevre was gratified to find a great-

ness of spirit in this particular like his own; but was confused at the refusal of his acknowledgment—'I merely thought,' said he, 'it was what, in justice to your family, I ought to give, and you ought to take.'—

'O no, Sir,' interposed the woodman, 'we be poor, but, thank God! not so poor as comes to that. An' was we never so poor, it would be no loss at the week's end to do a kind thing to a fellow creatur, when Providence puts it in one's way. Ye know, Sir, what scripture says, "He that giveth a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward"—and mayhap ye be a *disciple?*' said he, with a significant eye, that would fain have asked some word to indicate his piety, before he left them.

Lefevre sighed; and employed himself in taking up the rejected money.

He now began to move towards the door. The goodnatured boy, with a pouting look, which shewed he was doubtful how his proposal would be received, said, addressing his parents, 'Belike the gentlemun would ha' me to show him along the moor?'

'No,'—said Lefevre, turning to him and shaking his hand, while he conveyed a shilling into it.

He passed his hand to the mother, who stood next him, and looked on her with as full an expression of kindness as his troubled countenance would allow. Delighted by this notice, and affected by his quiet sorrow, she pressed the hand he had given, and said with a hesitating voice and reddening cheeks,—'If I may be so bold, Sir,——ye surely have some great trouble on yur heart,——It's not for us to say from where it comes — but if you'd only carry it to the Lord, Sir, you'd find comfort--indeed ye wou'd, Sir!'

Lefevre replied not, but put himself again in motion. The little girl had, ever since her offence, been looking sideways towards Lefevre, for some token of his favor; but in vain—he had not observed her. While he was taking leave, she took her place in the circle, expecting some notice as a mark of forgiveness; and now he was going away forgetful of her, she could no longer brook neglect. She ran

after him exclaiming—'Kiss me, kiss me! —I'll not be naughty.—I'll never tell what mother says, no more!'

Lefevre smothered his feelings, and took up the engaging child and kissed her. He put her down and gave, at the door of the cottage, his hand to the father. The hospitable man shook it affectionately, and, looking devoutly upwards, said, 'The best of Beings bless thee sir!' Lefevre's feelings were at length overcome. 'The blessing of him that is ready to perish come upon you and yours!' he cried with great agitation. Then he separated his hand and hastened away from this interesting family.

Although Lefevre had no disposition to detect it, it was evident, that piety resided under this humble roof; and to its benignant influence might be ascribed, in a high degree, that cleanliness and comfort, that spirit of independence and benevolence, to which it witnessed. May all our cottages be adorned with such fruits of righteousness! May the British peasantry become growingly conspicuous in those characteristics, which have taxed the re-

spect of their superiors, the admiration of the world! May they, though poor in circumstance, be rich in faith, fervent in charity, abundant in good works, and heirs of an everlasting kingdom!

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE respectful, generous, and even delicate treatment he had received at the woodman's cottage, for some time engaged Lefevre's thoughts; and then again they fell, with the force of habit, into former listlessness. The providential interference he had witnessed, however, gave birth to some slight acts of reflection. He felt the folly of exposing himself to such perilous evils as on the past night, and inwardly designed to avoid their repetition.

With this design, but without carrying out his reflections into any plan, or sorrowfully dwelling on his nearly exhausted resources, he wandered forward towards Guildford. Twilight was resting on the surrounding hills of this fine ancient town, when he came into its neighbourhood; and he continued hovering on its skirts, till, in the deeper duskiness of night, he could enter with greater security. On entering,

he looked only for a public-house where he might rest for the night; and he passed into the first that presented itself. Colours were waving above the door, but he did not observe them; a recruiting party was within, but heedless of them, he sought a box that was unoccupied.

Not so heedless was the recruiting serjeant of Lefevre. Skilful in his employment, his eye, with an air of vacancy, ran over Lefevre as he entered, and marked all it saw. To a man of quick, but not of deep penetration, like the serjeant, there was that in his manner and features that spoke merely of indolent dissatisfaction. This, however, was enough. This disposition was the one of all others the serjeant was most shrewd in detecting, from its having been uniformly the leading object of search; and, on seeing it in Lefevre, he concluded that he was his prey.

With his thoughts on Lefevre, while he appeared careless of him, he began his attack. He talked for some time most merrily of the pleasure of a soldier's life; and, to inspire his companions with a *warm*

sympathy in his assertions, he freely and more freely pushed round the intoxicating tankard. He, then, with *nonchalance*, introduced himself to Lefevre. He would have talked to him—but Lefevre would not talk. He would have prevailed on him to drink—but Lefevre would not drink. All his little arts were called forth and tried; but alas! they were tried in vain. He was retreating, with that mortification which belongs to a soldier especially, who finds defeat, where he promised himself victory.

Had this officer possessed any real insight into character, he might have spared himself his vexation. He had laid siege to a heart, which, unattacked, was disposed to a *voluntary surrender*.

Lefevre had soon gathered, that these soldiers belonged to the——regiment; part of which was quartered in the town, for a couple of days. That the remainder was coming up; that they were ordered to Canada; and that, on their way to the coast, they were looking out for a few recruits to complete the numbers of the battalion. This he thought was the very

thing he wanted. It would provide for him; it would save him the trouble of directing his own course; and, above all, it would effectually conceal him from the search of his friends. He had, however, withstood the officious manœuvring of the serjeant; and it was not till he had proved it to be useless, that Lefevre thought of obeying the inclinations of his heart. He then freely offered himself to the party, and was immediately enlisted under a false name—*Charles Lawson.*

Rash as this step certainly was, and injurious as it must have been to Lefevre in any better circumstances, it was now likely to be beneficial to him, rather than the contrary. Incapable as he was to be his own master, it was well that he should be under some superior control. No ordinary authority was now equal to govern his disordered mind; but the rigid sanctions of military discipline were not to be disregarded. Soon was he exasperated at a power so coercive; often did he sink into stubborn listlessness; but then again, the thought of *shameful* punishment

effectually roused him. Tired of the irritation of his mind, he resigned himself to perform duties, over which he had no option. Introduced to strangers, he felt, humble as it was, he had a character to maintain; this stimulated him to proper conduct. And, to avoid all suspicion or troublesome questions, from his rude companions, he placed a strong restraint on himself; and became social and conversable, while his heart was still alienated from all society. Perhaps he smiled—but the smile fled over his face like the summer lightning over the scorched hillock. Perhaps he laughed—but the laugh was so hollow—so abrupt, as to be, to the sensible mind, the most distressing expression of deep and nameless sorrow!

Some time was consumed before Lefevre, with his regiment, reached the place of embarkation. Much as he had wished to fly his connexions and native land, his heart sickened for a moment as he glanced on the vessel, that was to transport him from them—*perhaps for ever*. The winds continued unfavorable for a

period, and he began to quarrel with the delay—so restless was his heart!

However, the season began to open and the wanted breeze sprang up. The anchor was weighed; the sails were unfurled; and the vessel moved gently forward in her course. The rattling of the cordage—the shouts of the men—the calls and counter-calls of the officers, had run along the deck, and sung in the shrouds;—but, now, all was still, and all was lovely. The mighty waters rolled in fine undulations; and, as they broke on the side of the vessel, made the silence audible. Every sail was set; and all of them swelled and yielded to the freshening gale. Onward the vessel rode in calm majesty, ploughing through the sea; while the sparkling foam rose around her like a zone of chased silver. In the east, the moon was rising on the darkness, and shed her gentle beams on the path she was pursuing. In the west, the sun still lingered, and threw his last rays on the track she had passed; gilding her stern with glowing light; and creating, on the slope of a thousand fluc-

tuating waves, all the colors of the rainbow. Around this field of silver and golden light lay a deep sleeping mist, that gave new awfulness to the immensity of the ocean, and cast the air of enchantment on the land objects, which still kept in view.

Lefevre had received the general impression of this scenery, for it was all new to him; but his eye *dwelt* only on his native country. From the time of setting sail, he had sought a spot where he might gaze upon it undisturbed. As he passed along the shores, objects he had never before seen, seemed endeared and familiarized by the mere circumstance of their standing on British ground.

The ship now stood out to sea, and every object was distanced to his sight. He painfully felt every inch of way the vessel made. Soon the light of day became fainter, and the distance more considerable; till England only appeared as a promontory on which nothing could be distinguished, except the deep fogs that surrounded its foot, and the dim, heavy glory that still pressed its summit. Imagination

still ran over its favorite spots, and his affections, so long inactive, obstinately clung to his friends, now the hand of time threatened to separate him from them for ever. His distressed thoughts flew from thing to thing, and from one beloved person to another, busy but restless; as though the opportunity of dwelling on them would be lost to him, immediately the receding point of land should be lost in the dark horizon. The vessel heaved—and his eye was thrown from the dear spot on which it hung! He shifted his position—and strained every nerve of sight to recover it. Now he saw it!—no, it was a mist! Now! —no, it was a wave! Still his eye pierced to the line that bounded the sky and water; but, no,—nothing could be found! —Indescribable anguish swelled within him. A thousand tender ties seemed snapped at once. All the smothered sentiments of friendship, of filial affection, of local endearment, invigorated by the love of country, a passion so often found to survive other attachments, rose in his soul. The depths of sorrow were broken up—tears

gushed from his eyes—he sank down on the ground, and long and bitterly did he weep!

Salutary were the tears of Lefevre. As the heavy atmosphere becomes clear and elastic by the fall of rain, so his tears wonderfully relieved him of that gloomy torpor, which had so long oppressed his spirit. The light of heaven seemed beaming through the separating clouds of melancholy, and his whole conduct appeared to him in a totally new point of view. He was confounded at his own folly and presumption, in tearing himself from the bosom of his friends, and his native country. The name of his mother quivered on his lips, while he thought, for the first time, seriously of the agonies she must have suffered through his rashness. Softened by filial love, his mind turned to religious objects. He no longer held unnatural war with his conscience; but encouraged it in bringing to remembrance all his sins. Painful was it to think of the pious entreaties he had slighted—of the privileges he had cast away—of the talents he had squander-

ed—of the immortal hopes he had pawned to a base and deceitful world! He felt that he had ruined himself within reach of a thousand means, extended for his salvation! Never did sin appear to him so deceitful, so abominable, so 'exceeding sinful' as now. He not only allowed his guilt as formerly, but was *sensible* of it; and was not only sensible of it, but truly *humbled* on the account of it. It was not with the *consequences* of sin that he now quarrelled, but with the *thing itself*. He almost forgot that it had ruined him, while he trembled to see how it had dishonored God. He no longer rose in resentment against, or sunk in sullen pride under, the chastening hand of the Almighty; he was fixed in adoring admiration of the forbearing goodness, which had not cut him off from the living—which had even prevented his wilful spirit from touching his own life! He endeavoured to raise his eyes towards the heavens, now bright with stars. His heart filled. '*O God!*'—he cried with emotions made up of sorrow,

humility, and love; and the tears of regret were changed into those of generous penitence!

With the overthrow of Lefevre's pride, fell the power of *despair*. That genuine humility, which taught him to admire the divine goodness, insensibly inspired him with confidence towards it. The encouraging representations of the heavenly mercy, which Douglas had made to him, apparently without any desirable effect, now arose to his recollection. The promises of the Gospel economy were felt as 'the power of God unto salvation.' The light that discovered to his mind the real characters of his sin, revealed also the glorious work of the Saviour. While he looked on the cross 'and mourned as a mother for her only child,' delicious comfort mingled with his grief—it was the revisitings of hope! '*And may I—may I—may I hope!*' said he to himself with ecstacy; and again the tears ran faster down his cheek.

With christian hope came energy of soul to resolve and to execute. An anec-

dote, which had strongly impressed him years ago, occurred to his memory.* It was of a young man who had ruined himself amongst profligates; but who, by acting up to one resolution, redeemed the estates he had lost. 'Yes,' thought he, 'I too am undone—but I will alter from this hour! I have destroyed myself—but in God is my help! I will return unto God from whom I have so basely revolted.'—Unconsciously his soul assumed the exercise of prayer. Not a word passed his lips; but the tender joy that moved on features set by time to melancholy, and the tears that still trembled successively in his eye, and then fell on his clasped hands below, witnessed sufficiently to the inward feelings.

Short, but memorable, was that evening to Lefevre; quick, but effectual, the work that was wrought silently upon him. He had sunk to the ground beneath the weight of bitter regret, biting remorse, and oppressive despair; he arose, contrite in heart, renovated by hope, and elate with

* See Foster's Essays, Vol. I, p. 167, 3d. Edition.

joy and gratitude. The hand of Providence had waited his last temporal extremity, to give the friendly rebuke; and now it was given with such effect, that he alternately adored and kissed it in the administration. Never did he so distinctly perceive his danger; and it was in vain that he attempted to think as he wished of the redemption. The slave who leaps exulting, as the last link of his debasing vassalage falls from him;—the traveller who, enlightened by the emerging rays of the moon, starts from the horrid precipice, over the brink of which he was heedlessly walking;—the criminal who, condemned by the laws of his country, is waiting the execution of the sentence, but who receives a gracious pardon;—feel little, compared with what Lefevre felt, in being raised from the very gates of hell, by the arm he was expecting to shut him up to immitigable and everlasting punishment!

That night Lefevre found that joy is as inimical to sleep as sorrow; but, though deprived of their natural rest, his spirits were refreshed by the sweet cordials of

hope, and he arose in the morning cheerful and happy. He, now, endeavoured to take a more sober view of what had transpired; occasionally, however, he was obliged to pause and ask, whether he was recurring to a dream or a fact. Reassured of the reality of the change, the feelings of the past evening ran with almost equal elevation, into the experience of this day; and, by turns, gained and yielded an ascendancy. Now he breathed the humble prayer—now the fervid acknowledgment. Now he rejoiced in his deliverance—then he trembled at his hair-breadth escape. At one time, his spirit drooped under a sense of his weakness and rebellion; and, at another, it ascended again buoyant with faith. Often did the tears of penitence and joy mingle together on his cheek as they fell; and often did the cloud of self-diffidence pass over the sunshine of his now illuminated countenance!

To compose and edify his mind, he took from his pocket the little testament, which has been already named. It was the only article he had about him; except-

ing his watch, which his uncle had redeemed and restored to him. This was now a prize indeed. He saw several of the leaves turned down, and passages on them, containing pathetic invitations and encouragements, marked with an asterisk. He could not mistake the hand that had performed this work of love—*it was his mother's!* He pressed the book to his lips, and sighed; and then dwelt on the gracious pledges of mercy, as the testament of a dying Saviour, presented by the most affectionate of parents.

As he shifted the book in his hand, his eye fell on some writing on a waste page at the commencement. It stood thus:

'*Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth.*'

'*June* 16, 1808.' '*Caroline.*'

This was evidently written by the excellent young person, whose signature it bears, about the time she lost her parents. Lefevre might have read it before; but, from his state of mind, it now made a

striking impression. He had been meditating afresh on his own follies and the divine graciousness; and it made its way directly to his heart. God, as an all-pitiful and forgiving Father, seemed to make this tender appeal to him; and, with a spirit melted by filial love he replied—'Yes, from *this time*—the time of my greatest need—I will call thee my Father! From *this time*, I will renounce every thing opposed to my love of Thee! From *this time*, I will look to Thee as my guide, my refuge, my comfort. Poor, friendless, and solitary as I am, through my own wilfulness, I shall err no more if thou dost guide me—I shall fall no more if thou dost uphold me—I shall be wretched no more if thou dost bless me! My Father! bless me! My Father! from *this time* thou art the guide of my youth!' From this exercise of faith, his mind sunk into still and holy communion with the heavenly world; and the spirit of peace descended on his soul, as if anxious by its cordials to heal the manifold wounds of his bleeding heart.

The season was not to be forgotten.

Lefevre subscribed his name and the date, beneath those of his deceased young friend, as a memento to him for ever. And, all that day, he breathed the exclamation of 'My Father! My Father!' with the fondness of a little child, which, for the first time, finds it has power to utter the dear parental name!

As the pleasing surprise of Lefevre's transition from darkness to marvellous light wore away, he found that much remained for him to do. He was in the situation of a person who is the subject of a dangerous fever. The complaint had gathered strength till it reached the hour of crisis—that hour had gone by—but still the symptoms of the disease were cleaving to his frame. The resolutions he had formed were quickly made; but it would require days, and months, and years to body them forth in *action.* Nor could he expect, from what he now knew of the christian life, that the work could be effected without much labor and conflict. The cross he had engaged to carry, was a *daily one*—the temptations he had determined to renounce, were always

at hand—and the principal enemy he had to resist, dwelt ever in his bosom. Accustomed as his pride had been to domination, it was likely it would make most violent struggles to regain its empire. Pampered as his carnal nature was, it was to be expected it would swell against the hand of mortification, that sought to keep it under control. Weakened in body and mind by long habits of intemperance and sin, it was not to be supposed, that he could suddenly or easily recover the tone they had lost.

However, Lefevre stood firm to his purpose, nothing doubting. He felt that his resolves now, were very different from his former ones. They were not made in a hurry, as a *quietus* to his enraged conscience; but from a strong sense of duty. They were not formed in his own strength; but in humble dependence on Omnipotence. So that, while he dreaded to rely on himself, he possessed more composure and fortitude, than ever sprang from the boldest confidence in the flesh. He was well alive to his difficulties, but he beheld

them with the eye of one who is made wise unto salvation; and, with the self-devotion of love and faith, he could say, 'none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I may testify of the grace of the Lord Jesus.'

Social in his nature, and accustomed to communicate his pleasures, Lefevre now looked anxiously round on the companions of his voyage, for a friend; but alas! not one was to be found. Ignorance and irreligion prevailed throughout the vessel, with a few exceptions; and these, did not amount to a character capable of sympathizing with his feelings. In such a situation indeed, it might well be thought, that he would meet rather with opposition than assistance in his religious course; but there was something so portly in his manner, so commanding in his look, as made it difficult for insolence to attack him. The opposition he endured, therefore, was composed more of negative than positive qualities. And, such as this opposition was, it had, on the whole, beneficial tendencies. Lefevre's most virtuous dispositions often

strengthened against the power of resistance, but relaxed under the warmth of entreaty: like the hardy plant that will flourish in its cold desert, but languishes and dies beneath the artificial aids of the hothouse. Self-will was the original cause of this defect. It had been quelled. Yet it was only after much warfare that its influence could be destroyed. And, though he longed for the pleasures of christian friendship, perhaps it was well, that his incipient conflicts against its power, should be made in his present circumstances.

The *leisure* which was, at this time, afforded Lefevre, must also be considered as of great advantage. For twelve long weeks he had scarcely any thing to occupy his attention as a soldier; and during this period, he had a fine opportunity of directing his thoughts to the concerns he had so lamentably neglected. Again and again did he review the past, till the strong impressions he had received, were settled indelibly on his heart. The good seed that had been sown, had time to germinate, and it was watered by the tears of penitence.

The bread of life was not only received by faith, but digested by meditation; and the blessings of promise were not only sought by prayer, but received with watchfulness, and acknowledged with thanksgivings.

The objects, too, by which Lefevre was now surrounded, were calculated to accelerate and confirm the 'good work.' All before him was grand and sublime. A shoreless ocean at his feet—an unbounded sky above his head. The one, sometimes effulgent with the heavenly luminaries; sometimes lowering with tempest, without a ray of light. The other, now throwing its bursting billows against the heavy clouds; now, under a calm sun, looking like a field of emeralds embossed in a bed of gold! But who shall describe all the varieties formed by the mighty waters and the glorious heavens!—Lefevre, reclaimed from low pursuits and at ease in his conscience, was at liberty to mark them all, as they were presented. Cut off from all objects of human labor, excepting when he turned his eye on the little plank which bore him, he almost forgot

the works, and even the existence of man; and, when they were remembered, it was only to feel their utter insignificance. Nothing was great—nothing wonderful but God! He felt his presence in all. Sometimes wrapt in joy, he soared to his throne; sometimes covered with humility, he sunk prostrate at his feet; but always was he edified on his holy faith, as he perceived unutterable goodness sustained by illimitable power.

But, after all, the chief improvement of Lefevre, during this voyage, must be attributed to the close and careful perusal of the Holy Scriptures. He had obtained the use of a bible from a soldier, which had been issued from the British and Foreign Bible Society. It was the only book he now possessed; and it was well he was limited to it for a season. Formerly, in his best days, like many young christians, he read it rather to increase his knowledge and form his creed, than to mould his character and direct his conduct; and, though it had a constant place on his table, the novelty and multiplicity of other

books robbed it of the regard and submission its contents demanded. Now, however, it was raised in his hand, or laid by his side amongst the coiled ropes on which he frequently reclined, many hours of every day. He read and ruminated—examined and applied—till he was filled with astonishment and shame to find, that he was comparatively so ignorant of a volume, he had thought he so fully understood. He uniformly brought the whole word of God to bear *on himself*. By its precepts, he sought to govern his own practice;—by its evidences of the christian state, he tried his own character;—and by its promises, he endeavoured to administer to himself support and consolation. Light increased as he proceeded; and his concern became deep and humiliating to find, with all his knowledge, what mistakes he had committed on some of the most material, but simple points in the spiritual life. He saw, indeed, that he had often mistaken passion for principle; compliance with his own will, for obedience to the will of God; the gratification of vanity, for the exercise

of benevolence; and things totally opposed to the spirit of religion, for things not only innocent but commendable!

These discoveries of Lefevre were not, however, *entirely painful* in their influence. He felt that he no longer hid himself from the light of truth; but that he was honest, and willing to ascertain the worst. He trusted now in a might greater than his own; and he was prepared to confess his weakness. His heart was truly humbled; and, since he was unworthy, he sought to know it, that the grace of Christ might be magnified by him.

His relish, too, for 'the heavenly manna,' grew in proportion as he fed upon it. As he studied the scriptures, he felt they possessed a purity, an authority, a celestial savour all their own; no other volume ever spoke as they spake. If he had regretted that he had no other book to relieve his attention, he learnt in the end to rejoice in it, as privileged to live on angels' food. How did the wonderful economy of salvation open upon his sight in its harmony and glory! He saw that

the rock, on which his hopes rested, was broad and imperishable; his faith stood not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God; and his joy, though it had become less exulting, was more clear, settled, and penitential.

CHAPTER XXVII.

AS Lefevre drew near the shores of the new world, he employed himself in writing letters to his friends. To his mother he first devoted his pen. He said every thing that affection and humility could suggest, to soothe and satisfy her; and enclosing it to Mr. Palmer, solicited it as a favor, that he would prepare her mind for intelligence from him, before he gave her the letter. He then addressed himself to his uncle, to Wallis, to Douglas, and to John Graham. The letters written to the two last named persons are so descriptive of his sentiments and disposition, at this time, that it will be proper to introduce them; with the exception only of a couple of paragraphs, which notice the events already described in the narrative.

Mr. Lefevre to Mr. Douglas.

Off Cape Breton,
On board the ———

'Dear Douglas!

'Believe what you see! This is indeed my hand-writing. I am still in the land of the living. Will this news give you any pleasure? Yes, it will! I have first abused your friendship, and then cast it away, but you are still my friend. O, Douglas! my folly has caused those, who were most fit for friendship, gradually to forsake me; but you will not be of that number. Let me have the consolation of thinking, that I have one friend left to me; and that that friend is he, whom of all others, I have loved.

After the lapse of so much time, I hardly know whether I should have written merely to inform you, that I exist; but, since I hope I can say I live to better purpose, it is my duty to inform you of it, as some compensation for all you have suffered on my account. Yes! I trust I may

assert, that the awful visitation of the Almighty, which you witnessed upon me, was not in vain! I resisted it as long as possible, but at length my proud heart was compelled to yield. It was softened I hope into penitence; and, I would believe, I am an instance of the truth of your maxim, *that every returning penitent shall be forgiven.*

'Forgiven! O, blessed be that mercy that forgives me!—but I can never forgive myself! The very sense I have of the divine forgiveness, aggravates every transgression I have committed. Have I, with a knowledge of the will of God, refused to do it? Have I, professing to regard religion, grossly dishonoured it? Have I opposed the preventing hand of Providence, till my obstinacy made it necessary to that hand, in saving me, to shake my reason and my life, and give me for a season to "the buffeting of satan?" Have I pierced the bosom of the best of fathers, with the arrows of ingratitude and rebellion? Have I despised the gentle voice of a pitying, bleeding, dying saviour?——O, what

a sinner am I!—As perverse as Cain—as treacherous as Judas—as profane as Esau—as apostatizing as Peter—as worldly as Demas—And am I forgiven? Yes, I must believe, that the grace which has changed my heart, has pardoned my sin—but I *cannot forgive myself!* O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, then would I weep day and night for my transgressions!

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'How wonderful are the ways of God! It was when I had put myself beyond the entreaties of friends and the ordinary means of grace;—it was when he had permitted me to weary myself with my own folly, and to taste the fruit of my own doings;—it was when my heart had settled down into an awful state of sullen indifference to time or eternity—that, with a naked and outstretched arm, he did the work alone!—What grace!—What love!—What forbearance!—What wisdom!—I never think of it but I weep, and it is

scarely ever absent from my thoughts. "Surely his paths are in the sea, and his footsteps are not known." "He hath brought me up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay; and hath set my feet upon a rock, and hath established my goings; and hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise to my God!" O, if I am saved it must be as "the very chief of sinners." I have merited the lowest place in hell, and I desire nothing more than the lowest place on earth—the lowest place in heaven!

'Ah! Douglas though I have so long neglected your friendship, it is still natural to me to tell you all I feel; and you will not be in danger of concluding, from the disclosure of my sorrows, that I am *really unhappy*. You know, as much as any one, what is "the joy of grief;" and that joy is now mine; the only joy, perhaps, that is suited to one, who has sinned as I have done. I grieve, and shall ever grieve, over my past course;. but it is not the grief of *chafed pride* and *desperate despair*; it is, I trust, grief flowing from love, from faith, from hope. In the midst of such grief, I

am happy; so happy that I have no desire to be raised above it. It is the tear of remorse that withers and consumes the soul; the tear of penitence heals and refreshes it. My sorrows bring with them, that peace of conscience I had so long lost; and seem to renew unto me the sense of my Saviour's forgiving love. O, Douglas, I am emparadised now, compared with what I felt under the weight of guilt unwashed away! I can fully enter into the noble Luther's assertion, "that the worst estate of the christian, is better than the best condition of the ungodly." A sincere penitent, bathed in tears, knows a satisfaction, which the worldling cannot find, in all that glitters in wealth—all that is sweet in pleasure—all that is great in distinction!

'There is one thing, however, that presses heavily upon my mind, and often renders me *truly unhappy*. It is the injury I have done to my companions in wickedness. I too well know, that my revolt from religion confirmed them in infidelity; and that my daring in sin made them the bolder. I have done them a mischief

which I cannot undo. I am, I hope, reclaimed; but I cannot reclaim them. I may and will admonish and pray for them; but alas! they may still obstinately continue in a course, that will probably ruin their temporal, and certainly ruin their eternal interests. O Douglas!—It is only when I think of *this* that I shed tears of bitterness and gall!

'One of this number, I believe, you know. Have you not occasionally seen *Wilson* with me? And did you not once express yourself pleased with him? Poor Wilson! It is for him, of all the rest, I am most affected. He is affectionate and gentle; but easily *led*—alas! too easily led for me.' He was, when I first knew him, a regular professor, and I think a real christian; but I led him astray, step by step, and he became nearly what I was. He has an amiable young wife, and one child; and if he continues what he was, they and himself will speedily be ruined—ruined—O, how can I say it!—by *me!*—Douglas, my beloved Douglas, if he is living, find him out, for the sake of your

friend. Think that I am the guilty cause of all his guilt. Tell him what I have suffered —tell him how I repent. Pray for him—warn him—entreat him in your name—in my name—in our dying Saviour's name—to return unto the God he has forsaken! O, I cannot endure the thought of his sinking into perdition through my shameful example!

Let me know whether there is hope of him. Furnish me with his address when you obtain it, and I will write to him. At least, I will do my utmost for his salvation —and, who can tell?—the all-pitiful Redeemer may look upon him and save him! I *must* indulge this hope!

'There is a shout of "Land! Land!" on deck. We have come, I suppose, within sight of our port. It affords me no pleasure. Unused as I am to sea life, I shall quit with reluctance a vessel, where I have witnessed so signal an interposition of mercy; and with more reluctance shall I enter on a strange land, to dwell with strangers. But the will of my heavenly Father be done! All the evil I shall meet with

must be ascribed to myself; all the good, to his unmerited favor!

'O, Douglas, shall I ever see your face again? At least, write to me. Tell me you do not forget me. Tell me, that you only forget my conduct towards you. Surely I shall never be so mad as to trifle with your friendship as I have done; but for that hope, I must now rely on an arm stronger than my *own*. O, my friend, I cannot be too jealous of that proud self-will, and self-dependence which ruined me!

Write to my dearest mother and comfort her. How I long to have her forgiveness; and to know that my desertion of her has not broken her health. Cruel that I was! But, indeed, Douglas, I was not myself then; and my uncle's conduct, though well-designed, goaded my fallen, but unsubdued pride, to an act that might place me beyond his reach.

'Commend me most kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Russell, and beg them to pray for me. I know no one's prayers I value like those of the venerable Mr. Russell.

To enquirers, in general, say but little

of me. Under any circumstances, you know my dislike of high-flown professions; and, in circumstances such as mine, I am sensible, that the evidence of my sincerity is to be given, not by multiplied promises and assurances, but by *steady, persevering, christian practice.* May I be enabled to furnish such evidence, that the righteous may see it and be glad—that the sinner may behold it and repent!

'Will you send me out a few books. I will leave the choice to you, as you can judge what may be most suitable. Let me have also your correspondence to me. You will find it, either at my lodgings, or at my uncle's, with my other papers. I think it will benefit me, and bring you near to me in the land of strangers, to which I have transported myself. How I conclude on your renewed friendship. You will not withhold it, my dear Douglas?

'Your's, though unworthily,

'Most affectionately,

'Charles Lefevre.'

Mr. Lefevre to John Graham.

The Gulf of St. Lawrance,
On board the ———

'My Dear Young Friend,

'"The manner in which I parted from you in the streets of London, three months ago, has, on reflection, often given me distress. You must refer it, not to any unworthiness in you, or any variation of affection in me, but to strange disorder of body and mind—disorder brought upon me by my own errors.

'In coming to my right mind, one of my first wishes was, that my past miscarriages might be beneficial to you. I now write you, therefore, not merely to reassure you of my love, but to render my experience useful to the opening years of your life. And, if it shall, by the blessing of Him who alone teacheth us to profit, have this tendency, I shall not have suffered, even in relation to you, altogether in vain.

'How interesting does your situation appear to me! Young, eager, kind and

unsuspicious; yet surrounded by the artful, the fascinating, and the wicked. Exposed to trials under which many a lovely youth has fallen—to trials by which I fell; though sustained by the profession of religion, and friendships peculiarly favorable to my preservation. My dear John, in such circumstances, caution becomes you. In your path, there are pitfalls so nicely concealed, that the eye of experience can hardly detect them; snares so bewitching, that they will rather allure your confidence, than rouse you to circumspection.

'Though I have been of assistance to you in your *temporal* prospects, I have criminally neglected your *best* interests. The pledge I gave to your excellent grandmother extended to a future, as well as the present life; and this pledge I would now, though late, endeavour to redeem. I am sorry that I know not, at this time, the exact state of your mind, as it gives me a disadvantage in advising you. However, till I know more about you, I shall content myself with making some observations on evils, with which I had to contend; and

by which you, with every young person, must, more or less, be endangered. The modesty which is natural to you, will preserve you from ridiculing or despising a letter, which professes to counsel you; and without apology, therefore, I shall freely impart my sentiments.

'Let me then in the first place, as a point of the highest importance, entreat you—*to beware what company you keep.* As one stream mixing with another, insensibly partakes its nature; so you will necessarily be influenced by your common associates. If you mix with the trifling, you will trifle; if you mix with the gay, you will be thoughtless; if you mix with the wicked, you will become wicked. Don't think it is enough to see their faults, and to resolve to avoid them; if you seek their society, and delight in it, whatever may be your resolutions, you will gradually be reconciled to them, and afterwards adopt them. Youth are too apt to be *rash* in their friendships. They meet together—sympathize on a few common points—and then determine to *be one for ever.* This

is not wise. I would not have you basely suspicious of every body; but in forming your connexions, I would have your acquaintanceships grow out of a knowledge of character, and your friendships spring from tried and solid merit. This will be acting with prudence. You must not go by *appearances;* if you do, almost every thing will deceive you. You must go by *experience* and *proof;* and then you will go safely. Choose your friend, not because he is spirited and witty, clever and daring—not because he is of good presence or pleasing manners—not because he flatters your foibles, and applauds profusely your excellencies;—but choose him, because you have found him prudent and benevolent, pious and faithful,—ready to admonish you of a fault, to warn you of a danger, and to encourage you amidst the duties and difficulties of life.

'Another caution should be directed —*to the books you read.* Books are the companions of retirement, and what I have said on the choice of your friends, may be well applied to your selection of

them. Indeed, in some respects, the books you peruse are of more importance than the company you keep. We pay more deference to the author than the companion; we have easier access to him; and we are less jealous of his opinions. Here, then, you should be very careful.—Affect not to read *many* books. This will feed your vanity, and leave you empty and superficial. Let your books be *few*; but *well chosen* and *well read*. Take the opinion of those, whose knowledge and real excellence qualify them to judge, before you decide on reading any book.—Despise the affectation of a *false* liberality, in reading *erroneous* works. This shows an alarming presumption in young persons. Remember your mind is naturally inclined to error, and averse from truth. Your character is not yet formed; and, if we would venture "to try the spirits," we must first be careful to "know what manner of spirit *we* are of." Reject, as you would arsenic, those books that exhibit sentiments, which you could not read without shame in good society. To touch them, is to be polluted.

If one thing more than another succeeded in blinding me to vice, and raising my passions to desperation, it was *improper reading*.

'Especially, I would say, *read and study the bible*. I can never sufficiently regret my neglect of this incomparable book. Had I taken heed unto it, I might have cleansed my way through the early walks of life; but I was foolish. Do you improve by my folly. As Alexander used Homer, do you use the Bible; make it your companion all day, and your pillow all night. Nothing can be half so important to you. It is your guide, your counsellor, your judge. It contains the key to history—the models of finest eloquence—the genuine morality—the conveyance of immortality!—Make it the standard of all other books. Read them as a *judge*, but consult it as a *disciple*. Knowledge elsewhere, is tinctured by the earthly channels through which it flows; but here, it dwells as in its fountain—pure, spiritual, living, and life-imparting! In other works you will find good opinions grafted on

bad principles—weak conclusions gathered from just premises—the spirit of the world encumbering the spirit of piety—a strange mixture of clay, iron, and gold; but in the Scriptures all is gold—pure, unalloyed gold—authorised by the image and superscription of Jehovah, that rests upon it. Search the Scriptures, as the miner searches the bowels of the earth for the precious metals, for in them is eternal life, and they are they that testify of Jesus!

'Let me also beg of you, *not to rest satisfied with any thing short of genuine religion.* I know that your dispositions are serious, and that your habits from the cradle have been pious; but this is one reason why I warn you on this head. Numbers of youth are relying on such privileges; and, by doing so, have converted them from blessings into *curses.* Avoid this evil, and give your serious attention to religion. In studying its nature, let this be a governing sentiment to you—that it is a *vital principle.* Religion with some people—and people who are very strenuous on the subject too—is like a fine portrait, just and

complete in its outward parts, but *wanting life*—fair to the eye, but cold to the touch. Now, religion must not only be perfect in form, but animated with a *living spirit.* It is not composed of a proper act, or a decent habit—of sublime speculation, or manual observance—it is something above all this—it is the life of the soul, as the soul is the life of the body.

'Were I to describe this divine principle, I should say, it consists of *love towards God*, of *benevolence towards men;* and is directly opposed to the vanity, pride, enmity, and selfishness natural to us. Yes, the presence of this principle, and of this alone, will teach us to deny ourselves; and nothing short of this will validate our claim to discipleship. Our worldly opinions, our vain imaginations, our proud resentments, our carnal prejudices, our sinful propensities, must all be sacrificed. The right hand must be cut off—the right eye plucked out—the useful, the profitable, the beloved sin must be renounced. The Saviour's wisdom must guide us, and not our own; the Saviour's

will must govern us, and not our own; the Saviour's excellence must delight us, and not our own! If born again, we are not our *own* but *his!* O, Graham, try yourself by this test. I am the more earnest, because I fear, till since I saw you, I had not sufficient views of the nature of religion; and, if I had, it never appeared clothed with the importance and beauty it now wears. See then that you do not err. Mistake not slight impressions for indelible ones—agitated feelings for spiritualized affections—a partial change for a total one—or a perception of religion, for its actual possession.

'If you have scriptural evidence to conclude that you are the subject of vital religion, then, *Beware that you do not neglect it.* If those who, not knowing religion neglect it, are guilty, how much more the guilt of those, who neglect it with a sense of its value? As you regard your present —your future peace, I beseech you shun this evil! That you may be assisted in it, I would say:—

'*First, Watch habitually over all your*

conduct. Remember that every thing within you and about you, is opposed to your religious progress. If you are doubtful of any action or engagement, try it by the following questions—Is it warranted by Scripture? Will it injure my religion? Can I ask the blessing of God upon it?—If it will not bear this test, consider it doubtful no longer—it is a snare of the wicked one.

'*Secondly,* In addition to your daily prayers, *commence each day by meditating on a selected text of Scripture; and close it by serious examination.* Ask yourself before you sink into sleep such questions as these:—Have I observed my devotions? Have I done the duties of my station? Have I benefitted any fellow creature? Have I indulged any improper passion—pride—anger—or resentment? Have I made any progress in knowledge or holiness?—It is impossible for me to tell from what evils such a practice may deliver you, what good it may confer upon you.

'Shall I own to you, my dear John, that in penning this short letter, I have been obliged repeatedly to stop, and weep.

I have wept, because I saw you standing in slippery places. I have wept, because every advice to you was a reproach to myself; similar advice was given to me, but I trifled with it. However, I will hope you may be confirmed in wisdom by my dear bought experience. Trust not the world so much as to *try* it. I have tried it—madly tried it. It is but a bubble—adorned with glittering colors indeed—yet still a bubble: yea more—a barbed, poisoned dagger, that carries death with its wounds! And, though you should be exempt from its stings; though you should be prosperous in all your ways; though you should be gratified in every desire, and freed from the trials and disappointments necessary to humanity; your heart would still ache with dissatisfaction and uneasiness. Yes, nothing but God can satisfy and felicitate the soul. You live but for Him; and it is more important for you to live to Him, than for you to live at all. O despise not, then, your Maker, your Preserver, your God! You are bound to Him by countless obligations.

To me you are grateful for some little temporal assistance, and will you not be grateful to God for *all* you enjoy? O, give Him your gratitude, He only deserves it; raise to Him your prayers, He only can gratify them; fix on Him your hopes, He only can crown them! In His favor there is life, and His loving kindness is better than life!

'Let me hear of you all particulars. You know I have an interest in all that belongs to you. It is likely I shall never see your face again in the flesh; but let me have communion with you on earth; and let us mutually pray for a blessed meeting in heaven. See as much as you can of Mr. Douglas; you cannot prize his society too highly. May religion be the guide of your youth—the glory of your age—your immortal reward!

'Your's, my dear young friend,
with anxious affection,
'CHARLES LEFEVRE.'

These letters require no comment. They put Lefevre in different lights, but

in all he appears to the greatest advantage. It is neither easy nor important to resolve the doubt he expresses, as to his *former* piety. The good seed might have been stifled in its growth; or he might, though it is difficult to conceive it, have mistaken a *superficial* for a *radical* change. However, it was well, if he erred, to err on the *safe side;* for it is infinitely better, to fear we are not regenerate when we *are*, than to conclude we are when we *are not*. And, whatever may be the doubt on the past, the present state of his mind admits not of hesitation. His affecting penitence —his humble submission—his living faith —his anxious zeal and benevolence—speak not only of divine illumination, but of surprising proficiency in the lessons of grace.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AT length Lefevre reached the shores of Canada, and passed on to Montreal, with a strong detachment, as the ultimate point of destination.

This island is one of the most beautiful spots in the whole Province. Around its base flow the waters of the mighty river St. Lawrence. On its bosom rests the principal town, bearing its own name, the settlements, the villas, and gardens of the principal inhabitants; while its lovely hills, clothed with pasturage and wood, rise in undulating lines upon the horizon. It was on a gay spring day that Lefevre first saw it. The cattle were lowing for joy. Vegetation was bursting into life, with a vigor, luxuriance, and variety unknown to our climate. The sun was up in his strength, glorying in his influence on the earth, and smiling at his image in

the waters, which his own rays had transformed into an orb of light.

Lefevre saw all this, and admired it as the work of the great Creator, but he was far from *enjoying* it—he was unhappy. With a recoiling spirit he threw himself on the beach, and went forward to the barracks. He was shown to a little cabin, which he was to consider his own. He entered it, and, closing the door, cast a dejected eye on its bare walls. A voice within him seemed to say, 'This is your home.' His heart shuddered. He felt he could not give the sacred name of home to any place, distinct from his friends and native country. 'No,' said he, 'it is my *prison*. It seals my separation from all that is dear to my soul, and familiar to my sight. I am fixed amongst strangers. Not one of them loves me, or cares for me, or knows me! But the will'——he was going to add—'of God be done;' emotion, however, choked his utterance. He moved to the window, and resting his elbow on the sill of it, he relieved his passions by tears; and then, struggling with himself,

he lifted his glistening eyes to heaven, and said, in a gentle voice,—'Father, forgive me! Teach my self-willed spirit to say, "*Thy will be done.*" Teach me to feel that I am neither friendless nor alone, while thou art with me.'

This simple prayer had a tendency to confirm the resignation it expressed; and every day as it passed, though it did not make Lefevre insensible to his banishment, contributed to lighten it. Temperate, and even abstemious in his appetite, his body was no longer oppressed with languor. With the serious objects of eternity before him, his mind was a stranger to the uneasiness of ennui. Anxious to glorify his dishonoured Saviour, he was convinced, he was not to wait for splendid occasions for doing it, which might never arrive; but was to seek it, in discharging the daily duties of his humble situation with cheerfulness.

Accordingly, Lefevre resolved to give his attention fully to the claims of duty. To whatever he gave his mind, he speedily mastered; and the expertness with which

he had used the pen, was soon transferred to the use of his weapon, and the manœuvres of his company. His skill, his regularity, his nice appearance, his obliging conduct, and his strict regard to discipline, supported by a spirit and generosity of sentiment, so enchanting to a soldier, were soon noticed; and they secured the respect of his associates, and gave him an influence over them.

While Lefevre was thankful for the respect and influence he had obtained, he valued them principally as the instruments of usefulness; and in this light he was determined to strengthen them. He found scarcely one man in his company, who could read or write. To most of them, this ignorance was a matter of indifference, except when they wanted to communicate with their friends, and then he willingly became their agent. He wrote the letters they wished to send, and read those that arrived, and preserved separately the confidence of each.

Others, not content with begging his occasional assistance, wisely desired to

assist themselves. To these few Lefevre became a teacher; and the pleasure they had in their own progress, did not fail to communicate itself to him.

Many of the non-commissioned officers of the regiment too, were in a similar state of ignorance. The pride of these men would not allow them to take lessons of a *private;* yet it readily stooped so low, as to crave his help in making up their accounts. This Lefevre gave in the most obliging manner; till the worthy serjeants and corporals were prepared to resign, even what they could do to his more correct pen.

In return for all these civilities, Lefevre wished only to attract their thoughts towards religion. He was religious, and they knew it; and he hoped they would refer his conduct to its proper source. Without possessing his privileges, he saw many who were disposed to run into his excesses, and his soul mourned over them. He would have done any thing to have brought them from their wretchedness, to the enjoyments of real piety. Yet, pru-

dence dwelt with him and directed him. He had, now, too low an opinion of himself, to make any lofty professions. He remembered the superiority of example over precept on his own mind; and he wished his religion should rather address itself to the eyes, than the ears of his comrades. Far was he, however, from shrinking to bear his testimony in favor of godliness. He distinguished between prudence and pusillanimity. Sin never wanted a reprover when he was present, and he was invariably on the watch, for those rising events and seasonable occasions, which not only render a serious reflection appropriate, but carry it home with force to the conscience.

The fruits for which Lefevre was looking are of slow growth. For the present, he received little other reward, than the good opinion of all. At length his proper behaviour in a quarrel, that happened with some of the soldiers, brought him under the immediate observation of the commanding Officer. The major took particular notice of him; shrewdly suspected that he had been accustomed to better life; used

him frequently as an accountant; and granted him what privileges he could, to soften his hardships.

On the whole, the situation into which Lefevre had thrown himself in despair, became to him a source of comfort and satisfaction. The honest approbation of those around him sealed his reconciliation with human nature; and the commending sentence of a good conscience, with the witness of heaven, made him happy. But in the midst of this happiness, he felt himself a penitent and an alien. Often, while he appeared cheerful in the performance of his duty, had he to suppress the sigh, which was formed by the recollection of his beloved country; and often would he escape from the employments of benevolence, to shed, in retirement, tears of love and grief, at the feet of his Redeemer.

At a small distance from the suburbs of the town, there was a sweet little nook formed, as if to cherish the softest melancholy. A beautiful mount adorned by the birch and the fir, shut it up from the neighbouring dwellings. On the farther side

and near the foot of this mount, some flourishing laurels grew in a semicircle, and overshadowed the spot beneath their feet with their bending branches, so as to frame a natural alcove. A few yards from this, flowed a transparent brook, sighing and murmuring among the bright pebbles as it went along. Beyond this was a small burying place, but so sparingly touched by the hand of man, as scarcely to be distinguished as such by a careless observer. Nothing marked its boundaries, but the creeping underwood, which encircled it with its blossoms and verdure like a wreath. The graves were only distinguished by a slight elevation in the green surface, and the more copious appearance of the modest flowers, which had been planted over them. The air of nakedness that might have rested on this little enclosure, was wholly relieved, by the appearance of the willow and the poplar—the one seemed mourning over the remains of humanity, while the other was pointing to the world of immortality. Above this spot, stood a rich grove, forming a fine avenue over the upper part of the

brook, whose waters, thrown off by the deep shades of the clustering trees, sparkled as they descended like a stream of quicksilver. Without and around these objects, the ground rose again in pleasing and romantic shapes, so as to limit the eye entirely to their beauties.

This charming dell was the favorite retreat of Lefevre. When he first discovered it, there was something that reminded him of the notices given by the Evangelists of Mount Olivet, the brook Kedron, and Gethsemane. He had frequently resorted to it like Isaac to meditate, like Peter to weep, or like his divine Lord to pray. His first impressions, and his subsequent enjoyments, had associated a sentiment of sacredness to the place.

One evening, about three months after Lefevre had been on the Island, he hastened to this spot, in search of that repose and communion he had so often found. He stepped over the brook, and took his usual seat under the laurels. His thoughts were occupied with the admirable change which had been wrought upon him. Every cir-

cumstance as he mused upon it, raised his wonder and gratitude, till his soul was dissolved in thanksgiving and worship.

Swift the minutes fly while the spirit walks with God. Lefevre thought not of time, till the light was stealing away, and the grey mists were rising. He had tarried later than usual. He was putting his testament into his pocket, and on the point of moving, when a female clad in black appeared at the entrance of the dell. He paused a moment with his eye upon her. She moved slowly and sadly forward, with her face cast down to the earth, till she came to the burial ground. Lefevre judged she was a widow, and was visiting the tomb of her husband. He knew not what to do—if he remained, he should intrude upon her sorrows—if he departed he should interrupt them. Without deciding what he should do, he continued.

She approached a hillock beneath the willows, and stood at its feet as motionless, as though she had been a monumental statue. She then sank down on her knees, and, putting her face in her hands, rested

them on the grave, as the tears trickled through her fingers and moistened the sod. She arose; and, taking a shell from the root of a tree, she filled it at the brook repeatedly, and watered the flowers she had lately planted on its summit. This done she was turning towards the town. She moved a few paces, and then paused and turned, fixing her eyes on the grave. She went on again slowly some paces; then, turning quickly round, she hurried to it, cast herself upon it, and cried and sobbed aloud.

Lefevre's attention was absorbed by the scene. He longed to comfort her, but he dared not break in upon the solitude she courted. After some minutes she arose again, evidently more relieved. She raised her eyes from the ground to the skies, and turning from the dell as she did it, they fell upon Lefevre. Thus observed, he instantly decided how to act. He could not allow a stranger to think, that he had been a designing spy on her grief. He passed the stream, and approaching near her, offered an apology for himself.

The mourner started at the appearance of a common soldier; but recovering from alarm, she observed a respect in his manner and a compassion in his voice, that gave her confidence. 'Sir, I need no apology. It matters not who sees my sorrows, or who is ignorant of them,' said she, with an air of despair.

'Oh, madam,' replied Lefevre, answering rather to her manner than her words, 'whatever may be your affliction be assured there is consolation.'

'Consolation!' she returned, looking with anguish, 'yes, there is consolation, but not on earth. I have only *two* consolations left me. One is, to shed my tears on that grave, (pointing back towards it,) the other is, to think that I have a friend and Father in heaven!'

The allusion to the divine goodness, in the close of this sentence, alone dwelt on the ear of Lefevre. Those who would imagine how it affected him, must remember, that he had not heard the voice of piety, since he left the cottage on Bagshot-heath; and that, during the last five months,

he had been panting for christian intercourse, without the prospect of obtaining it. Had there been no opposition of sex, he would, in the impulse of joy, have seized her hand, and given vent to his feelings. As it was, he rejoiced inwardly to have met with a member of that family, which is bound together by bonds stronger than those of consanguinity.

Having been comforted in the most extreme distress, Lefevre knew how to comfort the wretched. He went towards the town with the widow, referring her attention to those views of the Providence and word of God, which he had found the most consoling; and soon they arrived before a little hut, which she named as her home. She modestly asked him to enter with her. He was in the act of declining; but, on seeing a girl about twelve years of age come out to greet her mother, he complied.

The widow seemed pleased to have an opportunity of explaining her situation, and dwelling on her sorrows. She stated, that she was a native of Berkshire, and that she had been tenderly educated. She had,

however, married against the advice of her parents. Her husband was of an unsettled temper. For the want of adopting a good plan, or of being steady to it, he had narrowed his circumstances, while in London. He could not suffer the reproaches that came upon him; and he determined to leave his native country. He had heard much of the traffic carried on with the Indians at Montreal. He thought he might pursue it with abundant profit, and declared his intention to make the experiment. Her father remonstrated against it, and insisted, with tears, that she should not go. 'But what,' continued the widow, 'could I do? My husband laid his commands upon me. We loved each other most fervently. I resolved to attend him, and share his fortunes wherever he went. We lost one child—dear boy!—on the passage. We came here about nine months ago. My husband was establishing himself, principally, in the fur trade; and it promised to answer his best expectations. But, two months ago, he was seized with the fever, and a month since, he was buried from my

sight! O, sir, none can conceive of my sorrows, but she who has been made a widow in my situation! I am a stranger, and an outcast—without a friend—without a home!'

She paused and wept.

Lefevre was affected. 'Perhaps,' said he, unconsciously sliding his hand into his pocket, and forgetting that he was about to excite hopes he could not enable her to realize,—'perhaps you desire to return to your native land?'

A distressing smile rose on her face. 'All places are alike to me,' she replied, 'if I might be unmolested. In England, indeed, I have a father. If I could see him once more, and obtain his forgiveness, and comfort his last days, how happy should I be! Dear, dear father!—But, perhaps I have *no father!* Perhaps the loss of his child went to his heart!'——

Lefevre was overcome. Her grief stirred his own, for it was very similar; and she had given language to a fear respecting his mother, which had possessed him, but the existence of which, he had not al-

lowed to himself. He raised his handkerchief to his eyes to receive and conceal his tears.

'Ah! you are kind Sir,' said the widow. 'You are the *second* person from whom I have found pity in my affliction.'

Just then a person tapped at her door. The child had seen him pass the window, and said, 'It is the French man ma'—he has been here, and said he would call again.'

The widow stept to the entrance, and on opening the door, a voice with a gallic accent, addressed her in a rude manner, 'I say Mrs. What-do-the'-call-ye, you can't stay here. I have found you out.—You must quit my premises to-morrow—mind that;' and the speaker disappeared immediately.

She replied not. Every insult she received drove her recollections back on her husband. She looked on Lefevre with agitation. 'O Sir!' she exclaimed, putting her hand to her head, 'this is too much, my brain whirls. I thought every body was kind to *widows.* I am a wretched, helpless, forlorn widow, but nobody pities

me! I am insulted, outraged, and baited like a wild beast. O my husband!—— Before he was carried from the house, I had orders to leave it. I went into another, and was not suffered to remain a fortnight. I have just come to this miserable hut, and to-morrow I am to be turned out. O'——

'Madam, be calm,' said Lefevre.

'Yes,' interrupted she, 'I will be calm! I will think of him, who had not where to lay his blessed head. Why do I forget it! O, Sir, it is only religion that preserves me. —This man says he has *found me out*. Ah! he has found out that I am *poor*. Poverty is a sin here, Sir. Is there such another people in the world? Wolves—all of them wolves—they would devour a poor widow and her innocent child!'

'Be just, madam,' said Lefevre plaintively, remembering his own injustice in similar distress. 'There are good and bad in all places. At least, give me credit, though alas I can do but little, for wishing to befriend you.—If you desire to continue here, no one shall remove you. This unfeeling man thinks you cannot pay him. I

will see him, and become your security. If the rent is paid, it is out of his power to disturb you!'

'Kind Sir! how shall I thank you!' cried the grateful woman.

'Never mind thanks,' said Lefevre taking his leave. 'Trust in God, he is the judge of the widow and fatherless. He will never leave you without a friend. Farewell!'

Lefevre had not given the widow this assurance without consideration. All the assistance he had rendered the officers of the regiment, had been given without any reward. He would not receive any thing for himself, because he knew to do justice to his motives, he must shew them he was disinterested in his conduct. But, now, he thought he had a fair opportunity of directing a trifle of what they squandered, to the help of the needy. A small sum would be sufficient to cover the rent of the dwelling; and he concluded, each one for whom he made up accounts, would willingly subscribe something for such an object.

It had occurred to him too, that the widow was well qualified for managing a little school; and that from such an employ, she might reap a comfortable subsistence. If, in starting, she should require a little extra assistance, he had a small purse of his own, which he thought of using. This little purse had been raised from his pay. That pay was small indeed; but as he preserved the whole, it rose in time from pence to shillings, and from shillings approached to pounds. He looked to this little hoard as a slight provision for himself in some possible emergency; but no sooner did he meet with the calls of distress, than he determined to consume it, if necessary, and place his reliance for the future on divine Providence.

Full of these purposes of benevolence his little room received him. He sat down at the window finally to adjust his measures. He saw that what his heart had suggested was within his power, and he dwelt upon it with delight. That night he thought his naked cabin looked more cheerful than usual; and, when he reclined

on his hard pallet, he imagined it more comfortable. They were not changed—but the joyance of a happy conscience, sheds its own influence on every thing around us.

The next morning Lefevre made his proposal to the officers. They readily agreed to it; and subscribed directly a sum rather larger, than what he thought necessary. He hastened, as soon as he could obtain permission, to the unworthy landlord, to engage himself for the widow's rent; and he rejoiced to find that after paying for the current week, he had an overplus. He then hastened to the widow to inform her of what he had done. He explained his opinion of her establishing a school, with which she gladly coincided. He then put the overplus of the subscription, and one half of his own stock, which he had united to it, into her hand, and begged her to accept it in making her first effort.

Unused to kindness, the good woman was oppressed by it.—'O Sir,' said she, scarcely knowing what she said, 'you are

too good! Indeed I must not lay myself under so many obligations to you,' extending her hand to return the money.

'You are under no obligations to me,' replied Lefevre; 'I am pleased to serve you. What I have done, I have done by a subscription made for you,' amongst the officers of the regiment, So you see, you have not only one, but *many* friends on the island, bad as it is.'

'Ah, Sir, I don't know what to say! Only that you are as delicate as you are generous. God Almighty reward you! I never can! But I'll see that your kindness is not thrown away upon me.'

Lefevre left the widow's with the sweet satisfaction of having lightened a burden to her, beneath which she was sinking in despair; and giving thanks to divine Providence, for granting him this opportunity of doing good. 'And who,' thought he, 'may not do good if I can? Though a private in my regiment, I find it possible to impart instruction and help to many there; and though a poor destitute stranger, with a paltry pittance, which I should once have

cast to any dirty beggar in the street, I can find means to give essential support to a destitute widow and orphan. Surely nothing is required to do good but the *disposition!*—O, for the money, the time I have cast away! How they might have blessed numbers, who have, perhaps, perished unrelieved and unpitied! How can I forgive myself for having been so deluded, by the base and debasing gratifications of selfishness!'—And then the troubled tear of penitence started in his eye!

CHAPTER XXIX.

WHILE Lefevre was benevolently endeavouring to benefit others, the Divine Benevolence was preparing for him, the highest reward he could receive. On his third visit to the widow and her daughter, he met with them a person on a similar errand to his own, and for whom he soon cherished the highest esteem.

The individual referred to, was a Missionary, and of the most admirable character. All would have allowed, that he was intelligent, discreet, upright, and zealous; but no one would have thought of discriminating him by either of these qualities. It was evident, that the most predominant feature of his character was—*Love.* 'The love of Christ dwelt richly in his heart,' and gave its mild radiance to the expression of his countenance. Those who saw him, thought, spontaneously, of that 'disciple whom Jesus loved;' and were im-

pressed with the conviction, that no vocation could become such a man, but that of a minister of mercy.

This principle of divine love had given him an elevation of mind truly sublime. It had nearly absorbed the sense of his own existence, in that of the object beloved: his motto was—'not I, but Christ liveth in me.'—It was evident that it had enabled him to sacrifice his country and his friends already; and that it had determined him to still higher sacrifices, should they be demanded. It had so familiarized his mind to spiritual realities, that he would often speak of the inhabitants and things of the eternal world, as we do of the members of our family, and the common objects of sight. It had given a greatness and simplicity to his views and pursuits, that raised him superior to those conflicting impulses of the passions, which interrupt and retard the progress of lower characters. Few objects that engage men in general, had any attractions for him. In his thoughts there was no room for the baubles of wealth or fame; in his heart there were no dark recesses where envy, vanity, and

bigotry might live and brood; he could not contract his tongue to utter the *shibboleth* of a party. His favorite appellation for his Maker, was 'My Father;' and his only name for man, was 'My Brother.' He wept over the sorrows of man, as the sorrows of a brother; drew a veil over the frailties of man, as the frailties of a brother; rejoiced in the happiness of man, as the happiness of a brother: and, though he could not suffer sin on him unreproved, he could not administer reproof with bitter reproach and malignant severity—for, was not the offender his brother? and was not he himself a sinner?

He was indeed a genuine *philanthropist*. His was not that grovelling sympathy, which regards only the temporal interests of humanity; it was that *christian* compassion, which is concerned for the *total* welfare of man. He was not the subject of that effervescence of feeling, which passes off in affected sentiment, and a few pretty sentences; he was the possessor of that living principle, which is the parent of *action*, persevering and self-denying. His love of man flowed from his love of God;

the only real source of disinterested benevolence.

Such a person was what Lefevre wanted. He had found some with whom he could converse on common topics, and others whom he could materially benefit; but he had not found an individual, with whom his spirit could mix, in all the confidence of christian friendship. He soon discovered the respect and affection, which the Missionary's excellent character had inspired; and enjoyed a return, the most sincere and cordial imaginable. If Lefevre admired the high attainments of his friend, his friend was deeply interested in his past history; and did not fail to observe, in his account of himself, how skilfully an invisible hand had been employing his trials, to correct the frailties of his character, and establish its excellencies. Indeed, a few interviews were sufficient to unite them in the bonds of closest brotherhood; and all their successive communion only strengthened ties, which they had thought nothing could make stronger.

This intimacy with the Missionary led

to an introduction to his connexions. Love begets love; and it will readily be supposed, that a man of such a spirit as our Missionary, had not laboured altogether in vain. Difficult as the progress of religion is any where, and attended as it was with peculiar difficulties in Montreal, he had succeeded in collecting a little flock from the wilderness, and in training it tenderly for a future state. It consisted of about a hundred adults, and as many children. Amongst these he dwelt as a father and friend, and had diffused through the circle a wonderful degree of his own heavenly temper. Hedged in from the world by neglect and scorn; and, if noticed, noticed merely as the mark of persecution, they only loved each other the more fervently. A single eye, a simple faith, a warm heart, and a helping hand were theirs; and, if like the primitive saints they had not all things common, they seemed to think what they possessed doubled its value, by bestowing it on a needy brother.

It was on a calm sabbath morning, that Lefevre first met this little community. He

went, before the hour, to the humble chapel, but found it filled. It was the custom with these people to assemble a quarter of an hour before the time, to implore a blessing on the public services of the day; and they were now all on their knees. As soon as the pastor appeared they arose, and the audible worship began. It was a delightful sight. Now you might see the swarthy Indian and the lively Frenchman; the rough American and the thoughtful Briton—renouncing, by the faith of the cross, their opposite prejudices and national enmities; and standing side by side, as members of *one* family, to worship *one* Father and *one* Redeemer. During the discourse every ear was bent—every eye was fixed—all were drinking in, with humility and gratitude, 'the words of eternal life.' It was admirable to observe amidst the contrast of features a similarity of expression—an expression of serious joy and holy love, which they caught from the beloved preacher. It immediately assured you, that if they differed, it was the difference of *appearance* only, and that their new-born spirits were above its influence.

After the service a small proportion, who had been of some standing, tarried to receive the sacramental pledges of their Saviour's love. They gathered round the person of their pastor. Silence prevailed a few minutes, in which the buzzing of a fly might have been heard. Their communion was sensibly more intimate and sacred than before. An Indian, with a diffident and asking eye seemed to say—'And am not I a brother?' while some looks of complacency fell on him that said—'Behold thy brethren and thy sisters!'

The service went on. They drank of one cup, ate of one bread, in one faith, and with one soul. They all sank again into still communion. It was hard to say, whether it was the communion of earth or heaven. The pastor broke the silence. 'Little children,' said he, with the accents of a father, 'love one another! Ye are brethren! Their is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free, ye are all *one* in Christ Jesus! Little children love one another!' He offered

the prayer of faith, and the tribute of love, and pronounced the divine benediction. The men shook hands—the women kissed one another, in silence, and in silence departed to their several homes.

Lefevre too, quitted the place in silence. His mind was filled with what he had witnessed. He had seen nothing like it—felt nothing like it before. It gave him new impressions. '' This,' said he, as he reached his dwelling, ' this is primitive religion! This is christian fellowship! This is heaven in foretaste! O how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!'

The design of religious enjoyment is to produce renewed devotedness. Lefevre was now surprised into pleasures, for which he could not have hoped, and he exclaimed with more than his usual emotion—' What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?' As iron sharpeneth iron, so the face of his friend quickened his ardour in every good work. He widened as much as possible the sphere of his friend's labors; induced many of the regiment to

attend his ministry; and lent him the most important aid, in prosecuting his plans of usefulness. Every day they found themselves more advantageous to each other; in acting together, it became apparent, how much more might be effected by their united strength, than could have been realized from their isolated exertions. They met with difficulties, but they were resisted by faith and love; and what cannot they overcome? And if, at any time, discouragement relaxed the energies of one, the other speedily charmed away his fears, and braced his resolution, by repeating those simple words—'*Remember Him who died for us!*'

But, though the overflowing love of Lefevre ran freely into every channel of usefulness that was open to it, the efforts in which he most delighted, were those directed to the welfare of children. Always partial to them, he had become remarkably so, since his restoration to religious enjoyments. Humbled as he was in his own esteem, he now sought to do good in the lowest class; though, from a false modesty,

he did not suffer any means that occurred to him, to escape neglected. Amongst men he felt himself in the society of his tempters; and, trustless as he was of his own strength, he feared lest, in attempting their benefit, he might once more be drawn aside. The penitence and self-abasement which followed his transgression, had produced a great simplicity and meekness of mind; these, however, were put under restraint by the presence of his equals. But with children he lost all his fears, all his restraints. With them he could indulge the feelings now dearest to him; he could become in act, what he was in sensation—'a weaned child.'

Lefevre, assisted by his friend, had done his utmost, to raise a school for the widow; and to render the attraction more powerful he had engaged to give her children instruction in writing and arithmetic, twice in the week. He also attended, as often as occasion allowed, the young charge of our Missionary; and assisted to accelerate their general and religious improvement.

The richest reward he could propose to himself, or the children, in these mutual labors was, an evening walk from the business and bustle of the town. Often might he have been seen issuing forth, with several happy faces around him. Often might he have been observed reclining either on the shores of the river, or in the cool recesses of the woods, and the objects of his love amusing themselves about him. To the senior children he would offer questions on the object which happened to interest them, that would urge them to thought and reflection; while the younger ones would busy themselves in admiring his figured buttons, in stroking his soft plume, or in venturing to touch his weapon, and then starting from it with momentary terror. Frequently, was he so absorbed in their prattle and their pleasures, as nearly to forget the dark passage of his life, and to feast over again on the delicious, but illusive joys of infancy.

However, amidst the duties of his station, the works of usefulness, and these innocent recreations, there were few mo-

ments in which he could forget, that he was an alien—self-banished from his dearest—his earliest connections. As time wore away, his concern on this one subject increased; and, after the revolution of that number of months, which might have brought him intelligence, but which brought none, he became truly uneasy. He continued to fulfil his engagements, but it was with an afflicted heart. If he saw an English letter in the hand of another, it would fill him with strange emotion. On every fresh arrival, he would hasten to enquire, whether there were any for him; and on receiving the negative, he would turn from human observation to gather up his tears.

One evening, after a distribution of letters, in which he had no share, he went to mount guard, with his thoughts full of home. He ascended to the ramparts, and paced the walk before his sentry-box, in dejected thoughtfulness. The sultriness of the day was gone; and it was now balmy and refreshing. To the east of the battlements stood a fine plantation, through which the

beams of the moon were streaming, with a brightness peculiar to the climate. Above them, rose in magnificence the principal public buildings. Immediately beneath, lay the town on a gentle declivity, intersected by streets, and adorned by the rich foliage of the gardens. At the foot of the town glided the waters of St. Lawrence, about two miles in breadth. In the midst of the river appeared the lovely isle of St. Helen; beyond it, was a plain of excellent pastures; and in the back ground, ascended hill on hill, and mountain on mountain in wonderful majesty—some naked and irregular, as if cleft by the thunderbolts of heaven—others supporting interminable forests, untracked by the foot of man.

As the night advanced, the character of the scenery insensibly varied. The last fishing boat was drawn on the beach till returning day. Gradually, the hum of the town died away—the curling smoke ceased to escape from the chimneys—and one after one, the tapers, that twinkled on the latticed casements, disappeared. Nothing

was heard. Nothing was seen to move. All was still as death. The moon had surmounted the wood, and ascended into the sky, surrounded by a group of satin-like clouds, which, while they professed to veil, only revealed her modest loveliness. So soft, so motionless, was the sweet light she had shed on the face of nature, you might have thought, that she, as well as man, was seeking repose awhile, in her immeasurable journey through the dark blue heavens.

Lefevre was awakened to notice the scenery by the noise of his own tread, which, from the prevailing silence, had become strikingly observable. His attention, once raised to it, was instantly fixed. Every thing sympathized with his melancholy, and rendered his grief tender, and even pleasing. He stopt, and resting his hands on his musket, gazed upon the heavenly luminary in still contemplation. It was an object familiar to him in his own land! It revived all the recollections of home, on which he had been dwelling. It seemed to reproach him as a friend, for

having quitted his native vales and domestic connexions. His forehead fell upon his hands, and the tears from his full soul, fell fast and audibly to the ground. Again he lifted his eyes to her bright orb. 'Ah!' said he within himself, 'it was my folly! O that I could return! but I cannot! O my country, my friends, shall I never see you again? Thou dost still shine on my country—but I shall never more see thee there! Every night thou dost visit the dwelling of my mother—perhaps her grave! —God of mercy, thou wilt not suffer my crimes to be the cause of her death!—But if she lived, would she not assure me of it? —would she forget her child—her only child? No!—I forgot her, but she cannot forget me!—Oh! since I cannot see her, would that I could know she is well—that she has forgiven me—and that she cannot cast me off!—Then alien—outcast as I am, I could be content!—But my Father—my heavenly Father! thy will—be done!'

This licence to his feelings composed his mind. He renewed his walk on the terrace, sometimes offering fervent prayer,

sometimes expressing filial resignation, and often indulging penitential regret, till the midnight hour broke upon the silence. Then he was relieved from guard, and sunk, with nature, into peaceful and exhilirating slumbers.

CHAPTER XXX.



ABOUT a week after this, when Lefevre had declined making any further enquiries for letters, one was presented to him by the person, who had the charge of distributing them in the regiment. With what emotion did he seize it! It seemed to restore his connection with his deserted country. He glanced on the superscription. It was the hand writing of his uncle. His hopes fell. It was only a reproach for his conduct. Yet still it was from England— and from London; and might at least give him information of his mother. He burst the seal. It contained an order for thirty pounds, and ran as follows:—

London,

'DEAR NEPHEW,

'I was glad at heart to get your letter, for we had given you up for dead, and your mother would have it, that you died

in Yorkshire, and were buried as a vagabond by the parish. But you're alive, and all's right again.

'Say no more about sorrow and pardon, Charles. You see that you have done wrong, that's enough. I did say, to be sure, that I'd never forgive you, but then I'm hasty—yes, I must allow I'm hasty. That's one of my faults. Every man has his faults. But there's one thing I can't do. I can't hold malice. One must forgive, you know, Charles, as one hopes to be forgiven. So say no more about it.

'I would have answered you sooner, but I wanted to send you good news, and now I can. I have got your discharge! A hard job!—but I've managed it. You know I'm pretty great with the young baronet, who stays with us when he stays in town, and I made him take it up. Where's the use of friends unless we use them, aye boy?

'I send you an order for £30. Say nothing about it. You are my nephew, a'n't you? It's what I should have spent in a long journey and a tomb-stone for you, but

for your letter; and don't you think I'd better spend it on a living, than a dead nephew?

So, come, come, Charles, make haste home. Spend as you get—look before you leap—mind the main chance—and keep clear of those confounded methodists—and you'll be a man again. All but Douglas. I think he's good for something; though he'd be no comparison better, if it wasn't for his religion.

'I remain,

'Your true uncle,

'THOMAS PERRY.'

Delight filled the mind of Lefevre on reading the intelligence of this letter. He read it a second time. All was true—he could not mistake it. But his joy was mixed with regret for his uncle—'kind but mistaken man,' said he; and with disappointment at not finding the name of his mother—'Why did not he speak of her? Why did not she write to him?' However, he consoled himself by thinking, that had any thing serious happened to her, it

would have been stated; and recurring to his discharge, he knew he should soon have the means of satisfying himself.

But where was this discharge? 'It would,' thought Lefevre, 'be sent to the commanding officer. But why did not the Major inform him of it?' He resolved in an instant to go to him, and make enquiries about it: and then amending his resolution, he unwillingly fell under the conviction, that he ought to wait his superior's pleasure.

To wait is a most difficult lesson to learn. It was one to which Lefevre was particularly opposed; and it was only by severe discipline, he had been taught it. He waited; but he could scarcely be said to wait *patiently*. All that day and night he passed in suspense, sometimes imagining to himself his joyful return, and sometimes fearing that some unforeseen disaster might arise for ever to prevent it. Often he repeated the words, to which he accustomed himself beneath an unwelcome dispensation—'Thy will be done;'—but the very frequency of their use proved that

his heart did not cheerfully acquiesce in them. That heart had been well schooled of late, but it still retained some of its old propensities.

The following morning Lefevre received a summons from the Major. It was no sooner communicated than obeyed. Trembling with emotion he stood before his commander. The Major behaved in the most obliging manner. He asked those questions which were requisite, to assure him that Charles Lawson and Charles Lefevre were the same person. He acquainted him with the arrival of his discharge. Thanked him for all the assistance he had given him; and expressed his regret, by assuring him, that he thought his departure a loss to the whole regiment. Lefevre made heart-felt acknowledgments for this condescension, by which he was much affected; and left his presence, with the waking certainty of bliss and freedom.

Lefevre was now free, and no time was to be lost in availing himself of his liberty. The season was far advanced; the frost might suddenly set in; and then the

voyage would be impracticable. He determined, as an opportunity offered itself, on leaving the island for Quebec the next day.

Although this determination was formed with pleasure, it gave Lefevre pain to impart it, and his discharge, to his friends, the missionary, and the widow. The intelligence was unexpected and afflictive. He sympathized with their emotions in silence and tears—tears that some might have referred to grief, others to joy, but which were, in fact, composed of both.

For the last time Lefevre saw the rosy light of the morning dapple the sky—glance on the water—and disperse the sleeping mists of the valleys in Montreal. It was a busy—an important day to him. His thoughts would often recur to it; and he desired to make it pleasant to his remembrance.

After his early devotion, he hastened to the widow's penurious landlord, and paid a year's rent in advance, that the burden of it might not come upon her, till her school was well established; and deposited

the receipt in the hands of their common friend, who would now become her only protector.

Lefevre then went to take his leave of the Major. The officer was sitting down to breakfast, and he insisted on his joining him. The cloth being removed, he rose to go. The Major took his hand and shaking it, said, with some agitation, 'Farewell Mr. Lefevre! I thank you again for your services.—If ever I should be able to serve you, think of me as *a friend.*'

'Sir, you are too grateful for my trifling services,' replied Lefevre, bowing and withdrawing into the hall.

This done he was joined by the Missionary. He went with him through the barracks, distributing tracts and testaments amongst the men; and, as he took leave of those with whom he had been familiar, he embraced the opportunity of naming and introducing his friend to the attention of others, who had not yet been prevailed on to observe the sabbath, or to discover any sense of religious propriety.

The moment of breaking with our con-

nexions is sometimes the first moment, in which we learn how dear, and how useful, we have been to them. The natural reserves of the heart are for a while discarded; and the moved spirit speaks as it feels. Lefevre, though he had persevered in his efforts to do good in the regiment, had been often discouraged, by the want of solid and visible fruits; but he now found, with surprise and gratitude, how far his labor of faith and love was from being in vain in the Lord. Feeling discovered itself, where he had thought something worse than indifference lurked; a simple sentence in some cases cherished hope, where he had little to expect; and in others, his spirit mounted into divine joy as he concluded, that the good seed had taken root, and was yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

The boat was now waiting to bear Lefevre from the island. He and the Missionary took a courteous leave of the soldiers in general; while a number of them most attached to Lefevre, prepared to follow them and 'see him off.'

The hearts of the two friends were so full, that they dared not agitate them by words, lest they should burst all restraint; and they passed over a considerable portion of the way to the beach, in an awful silence. At length, the sight of the river moved them to speech; they felt pungently, for how short a time that privilege was now theirs!

'Your visit, my dear Charles, to Montreal, has not been in vain,' said the Missionary, endeavoring to support Lefevre's spirits.

Lefevre could not reply. What he had witnessed among the soldiers had too much affected him. He raised his eyes and his heart to heaven, in unspeakable gratitude.

They came nearer the shore. The boat which was to receive Lefevre caught the Missionary's eye, and pressing his arm, he exclaimed, 'Oh! Charles, how can I part with you! You have been my counsellor, my companion, my assistant, in every good work. My spirit was yearning for such a friend as you, when Providence sent

you to me! How my cares have been softened—how my joys have been encreased, by sharing them with you! How shall I miss you!'

'O my friend!' cried Lefevre, pressing his hand—'I little thought this hour would bring with it such a pang. When I first set foot on this island, I could not suppose it would ever cost me a sigh or a tear to quit it; but now I suffer so much, that I could not resolve to leave it, if it were not for——Ah! my friend, I have a mother, and a country, far, far away!—You have a mother—you have a country—you have forsaken both for the love you bear our Redeemer—but I have not your faith—your magnanimity!'

'My dear Charles, do not afflict me,' exclaimed the Missionary. 'You could do what I have been enabled to do, did it become your duty, as it did mine.—It is your duty to return to your friends; and I rejoice in your happiness, and submit to divine Providence. The hand that gave you to me, has surely a right to resume the gift. But still I must grieve for you.—

There is nothing on earth I now value but friendship, and I must regret the loss of a friend—and *such a friend!*'

They mused as they finished their way; each of them seeking to compose himself for the separating moment. Lefevre sought strength for the trial from above, and the occasion demanded it.

They arrived at the water's edge. An affecting sight offered itself. There stood immediately around them the widow's child, with several other fatherless children, to which Lefevre had given special attention. Just above them was the widow herself, with three other mothers, one of them bearing on her bosom an infant. Above and around them again, were now collected about a dozen soldiers, with a corporal, of whom Lefevre had great hopes. The little group, with the town rising behind it in picturesque beauty, might have gratified a poet's eye, and employed a painter's pencil; but Lefevre beheld it under the higher sensations of religion, friendship, and benevolence. He thought of Paul's farewell to the Ephesian Elders. The

words 'And now behold I shall see your face no more,' rang in his ear and sank into his heart. His frame became agitated, and he found he must not pause to reflect.

He approached the soldiers, and gave his hand to each. They received it and shook it heartily, each one dropping a few words characteristic of the speaker.

'Farewell,' said one, 'health and long life to you, sir!'

'A good sight of your friends!' said another.

'I too have a wife and bantlings in England; but belike I'll never see them!' said a third, turning away his face.

'Well, if you must go, you must go,' cried a fourth carelessly, ashamed to show his emotion, while a rebellious tear leaped from beneath his eyelid.

'You've doffed the soldier's coat,' said a fifth, glancing at his dress, 'but you've still a soldier's heart—true and generous. You'll never doff that, sir.'

'And, though he has changed his coat,' continued the corporal, 'he is still a soldier. We shall fight Mr. Lefevre under

one banner I hope. Sir, I shall never forget your goodness!'

Lefevre stood out in the centre of them. 'Comrades and friends,' said he, 'one and all, farewell! May we all fight the good fight of faith! May righteousness be our breast-plate—salvation our helmet—truth our sword—and confidence in God our shield! Remember friends, our *first* allegiance is to God—our *chief* enemy is sin—our *greatest* victory is the conquest of ourselves! Comrades! I thank you for all your friendship towards me! Farewell!'

He returned to his place before the children. Two of them advanced and presented a nosegay, and all of them courtesied and wept. He received the simple offering with an affectionate smile; embraced them, and said a kind word to each.

The mothers pressed forward into the line of the children. The widow extended her hand with a handsome fur cap, modestly saying, 'It is the widow's mite, sir. Would that it were something worthy of your acceptance!'

'The *motive* makes it worthy,' replied

Lefevre, tenderly shaking her hand. 'Remember one scripture for *my sake*,' he continued,—'Thy Maker is thy husband!'

'I will carry it to my grave,' she resumed with tears—'And may He who is the Judge of the widow and fatherless, recompense you a hundred fold!'

'And may God Almighty help you!' cried the mother next her, taking his hand,—'for you delight in helping the helpless—that's like Himself, it is—it is!—' as feeling checked her volubility.

'Here, sir!' exclaimed the third, approaching, and revealing the happy face of a sleeping infant, that had lain on her bosom—'look at this boy! his name is *Charles Lefevre* from this day, and I'll have him *christened* so before night! So, if we must lose you, we'll not lose your name! Blessings on you! when I want to think of what is good and kind, I'll think of you! What! should not this babe and I both have perished, if it hadn't been for you, and Mr. Minister there!' looking on the Missionary.

Lefevre was distressed. He took the

child and kissed it, and gave in silence his hand to the gratified mother.

One other, but the hardest of all tasks remained to Lefevre. It was to take leave of his friend. They turned towards each other, yet ventured not to exchange looks.

'Charles,' said the Missionary, 'at ten o'clock I usually commence my private devotions. At that hour I shall always think of you; will you make it sacred to the same recollections and worship?'

'I will!' replied Lefevre.

The Missionary took a seal from his watch chain, and gave him. 'Keep this,' said he, 'as a token of my friendship.'

Lefevre accepted it in silence, and taking a silk handkerchief from the few articles it enveloped, he presented it saying, 'And keep that for me.'

They paused a moment looking on the ground. They raised their eyes. They met each other. Their souls sympathized in unutterable sentiments. They were locked in each other's arms a few instants. They separated. It was for ever! 'My friend, my friend!' cried Lefevre as he tore

himself away—'We meet in heaven!' said the devout but afflicted Missionary.

The deed was done. Lefevre knew he must not linger after it. He waved his hand to the whole party, who had been mute and weeping spectators of this parting of the two friends. They acknowledged it by a similar motion, but without a word. He sprang into the boat, and sank on the seat; and all was so still, that the gentle rippling of the waters on the sand was heard. The silence yielded to the treble voice of some of the children, who sang in plaintive measure the following stanzas:—

The Farewell.

GENTLE stranger, fare you well,
Heavenly blessings with you dwell!
Blessings such as you impart
To the orphan's bleeding heart;
Gentle stranger, fare you well,
Heavenly blessings with you dwell!

Ah! he leaves our pebbly shore,
We shall see his face no more!
Stranger, when you've passed the deep,
We shall think of you and weep!

Gentle stranger, fare you well,
Heavenly blessings with you dwell!

Blow ye breezes, kindly blow!
Flow ye waters, softly flow!
God above! his way attend,
Bear him to his journey's end;
Gentle stranger, fare you well,
Heavenly blessings with you dwell!

This simple effort of gratitude, accompanied by the tears and sobs of the lesser children, recalled Lefevre's thoughts from the pang inflicted, by the last act of separation. As they sang, the boat bore slowly away from the shore, till their voices became one sound, which rose and fell upon the waters softly, sweetly, like the wind sighing in the Eolian harp. The sound was lost. He desired the boatmen to rest the oars. One dying note swelled on the breeze, and faded in his ear. It was the last! He could now no longer distinguish persons. He strained his eye in search of the Missionary, but in vain. He could only perceive the waving of handkerchiefs. —Now, these sank in the distance; nothing

could be discriminated, but the principal buildings, towards the summit of the island. These too disappeared, and nothing, except the lessening land, remained for his eye to rest upon. He looked upon it, as John did on Patmos—the place of his banishment indeed, but the place where, in an eminent degree, he had enjoyed manifestations of the divine favor. It vanished wholly from his view! He put his face in his handkerchief, and continued for some time motionless. He thought of the perverseness which took him there—of the heavenly mercy which had prevented the effects of his own folly—of the pleasures which he had found there, in devotion, benevolence, and friendship—and his spirit was melted within him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

SOON were the sorrows of Lefevre, on leaving Montreal, subdued by the animating recollection, that he was going *home*. Soon did he arrive at Quebec; and without pausing to see the falls of Montmorenci, or other wonders of the new world, he hastened on board the vessel, that was to convey him to the haven of his country.

The anchor was weighed; the sails were unfurled; and the freshening gales pressed heavily upon them. Now they cleared the shipping in the river; now the glistening heights of Quebec were lost. Rapidly did the vessel plough up her path over the gulph of St. Lawrence; and quickly was she riding in majesty, on the swelling, tumultuous waters of the great Atlantic Ocean!

Lefevre was a most joyful witness of this scene. He would have enjoyed a fine

sail on the boundless deep, for its own sublimity; but his enjoyment was improved many degrees, at this time, by the conviction, that every fathom the noble vessel cleared, brought nearer the realization of his highest wishes. Often he looked at her foaming sides, with eyes beaming with hopeful pleasure; and then, with ecstacy he would exclaim—'Faster, faster, faster!'

Yet there was a demand on his patience. He had the prospect of making a very quick passage; but still time, and considerable time, was necessary for its accomplishment. This Lefevre knew; and, to compose his mind, and occupy some weeks, that would otherwise be most tedious to him, he determined to employ them, in drawing out a short account of the last eventful ten years of his life. In doing this, he proposed rather to register the faults of his character, than the incidents of his history; he wished to trace the influence of events upon him, rather than dwell on the events themselves. He sought to account for the variations of his mind, under certain circumstances; and, especi-

ally, it was an object with him to mark most distinctly on this moral chart, the rocks, and shoals, and quicksands, on which he had nearly made shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience.

As Lefevre applied himself to this good work, he found it became most interesting and agreeable. Most of his days, excepting what parts were sacred to devotion, were given to it; and it itself was so truly beneficial to him, that it might well be denominated with those exercises, that are immediately paid to God. It improved his self-knowledge. It gave a palpable and durable existence and connexion to those impressions of his heart, which were engraven in indelible characters; but which, though indelible themselves, might, by the hand of forgetfulness, be separated from all those circumstances, which rendered the remembrance of them advantageous. It confirmed his humility—awakened his circumspection—invigorated his purposes—and exalted his soul, to renewed acts of gratitude to his Deliverer! It is one of those employments of his life, for conduct-

ing his thoughts to which, he will ever be thankful to Divine Providence.

Delightful as was this engagement to Lefevre, it did not withdraw his attention from the progress of the vessel. His night and morning question to the helmsman was —'How many knots an hour?' and the reply always had its effect upon his feelings. As they neared to land he became uneasy, and could not settle to the use of his pen so freely. He spent much time on deck; and for hours he would sit on the cable, or hang over the forecastle, anxiously searching for land, where all was wide, illimitable water.

After he had, one afternoon, wearied his sight in this exercise without success, a voice from the rigging announced 'Land.' Lefevre flew up the shrouds, and begging the glass, sought for the object. For a time, his eagerness prevented his discovering any thing; and when he did detect it, he feared it was a cloud — he had been before deceived by such an appearance. However, ere the day ended, all allowed it to be land; and the captain assured

them it was England! Lefevre gazed upon it while it was visible; and was seen at the prow of the vessel seeking for it again, in the mists of the ensuing morning.

What with the haziness of the weather, and what with the ship's taking an eastward direction to drop into the mouth of the Thames, to Lefevre's disappointment, the land became little more visible all that day.

The early light of the next day was, however, more favorable. The North Foreland lighthouse, and the cliffs that project on each side of it, were distinctly recognised, veiled in a frosty mist, through which the sun was shining, like a mother smiling in tears. These were objects familiar to Lefevre; his heart palpitated with joy. 'My country! my country!' he cried, 'Let me once more rest my weary feet on thy shores, and I will never again forsake thee! Other countries may yield richer fruits—boast a finer climate—claim a wider empire—or be tricked out with more of the blandishments of artificial existence—but with thee is found liberty of thought, do-

mestic peace, and the temples of piety— And thou only art *my* country!'

Presently the atmosphere became clearer, and the town of Margate, with the Kentish hills, appeared. His thoughts strayed to Chatham; and he shuddered to remember how he had exposed himself to the worst of temptations, while he longed to discover the unknown individual who had probably been the instrument of his redemption. They passed on to Sevenoaks, and hovered over the dwelling of a person, for whom Lefevre cherished an unabated esteem. Hope seemed to be struggling within him; but it was a *dying* effort. He formed his resolution in case Wallis, or some unexpected circumstances, should bring the matter before him. 'No,' said he in a suppressed voice, 'she shall suffer no disturbance on my account. Excellent woman! I must admire her for her very rejection of me! I wonder I could ever have addressed her! But sin had debased my character, and blinded my understanding!—No,' he continued, 'I will never marry! My past iniquities cut me off from this privilege. I

should be unjust to make overtures to a person who had not fallen as I have; and I never could think of any other.'

About mid-day they passed the Nore, and soon came in sight of the dome of St. Paul's. He beheld it with melancholy pleasure. His home, his friends, seemed present to him; but with them came the scenes of his folly and wantonness. Unconsciously his spirit became penitent and prayerful. He doubted himself; but he gathered strength in his Almighty Protector. He determined, whatever might be his privations, never to enter the office where he had been so ensnared. 'No,' said he, 'I have been accustomed to hard fare and an empty purse; and I will submit to be poorer still, sooner than risk the peace of my mind again.' This purpose, taken to guard his future peace, promoted his present satisfaction. Confiding in God, he looked towards the Capital full of tender and delicious sentiments.

His agitation encreased as he approached the goal of his wishes. But the tide turned before they reached Graves-

end; and they were left to contend with it only by the help of a weak breeze, that flapped fitfully in the sails. The sun went down; the moon rose in brightness; the tide flowed again; and night was wearing away before the vessel was moored in the Pool. Lefevre jumped into a wherry, and speedily leaped again on the loved shore of his country! He could say nothing—he was almost fainting with eagerness and joy! He paused to recover himself from the tremors of gladness, and the unsteadiness consequent on the motion of the vessel; and then hastened on his way to his friend Douglas, anticipating with delight, the moment of seeing him face to face.

With his thoughts thus engaged, his attention was arrested by the tolling of the great bell of St. Paul's. It was the funeral knell which attended the remains of the Princess Charlotte, and her infant son, to the awful tomb. Solemn and more solemn it broke upon the stillness of night, till the surrounding churches, as by sympathy, repeated the heavy tones; and the sounds of death vibrated through the empty

streets, and sang mournfully in the vaulted heavens!

A demand on our grief in the moment of exultation is like snow in harvest. Lefevre was peculiarly affected by this national lamentation, just when his heart was bounding with joy, at his return to his birth-place. 'Ah!' thought he, 'such are the contrasts of this life. I embrace my native land with rapture; the hope of the reigning family leaves it with a groan. The world itself is but a port into which some are entering with pleasure, and from which others are departing with anxiety. *Here*, the tear of joy is often supplanted by the tear of woe; the marriage favor and the emblems of mortality frequently reach us at the same time. Well! this is not our rest!'

His mind having been suddenly directed to melancholy objects, Lefevre's reflections continued in a similar train, till they became of a more painful nature. The voice of death that still filled his ear as he passed along the town, insensibly mingled itself with the thoughts of his mo-

ther, which had previously engaged him; and, in the end, gave undue strength to his alarm on her account. 'Was she well? Was she living? Perhaps the death-bell had done its last office for her!——And then again, he was going to Douglas—but how would he receive him? He might repulse him! He had not answered his letter! Why did he not answer it?'

Under this cloud of apprehension, Lefevre arrived at the residence of his friend, and in an instant stood before him, still doubtful of his reception.

Douglas was alone in his parlour, and was listening to the melancholy sounds, which reached his ear from every quarter of the metropolis, and reflecting on the frailty of human existence. His attention had been so abstracted, that he did not notice Lefevre's knock at the door, nor had he the least expectation of his having left Canada; so that, when Lefevre presented himself to him, it almost seemed like a visitation from the tomb, and he started involuntarily.

There was, however, no hesitation in

his surprise. If for a moment he was startled at the unthought apparition of his friend, the next moment he folded his arms around him in speechless joy!

'My mother?' said Lefevre with an enquiring look. 'Tell me is——'

'She is living and well, I believe,' replied Douglas, catching his meaning.

'God is good!' cried Lefevre, as his distress faded from his countenance—'Blessed be his name!'

They gazed on each other without offering to speak, aware that each had much to communicate, which defied all words to express; and before they were employed again, confidence was restored—affection was exchanged—and they became sensibly to each other, what they had ever been.

Then they relaxed into conversation. Douglas explained that he had answered his letter, but that as he was from town when it came, he had not the opportunity of doing it so early, as he otherwise should have done. Lefevre also informed him of his uncle's having procured his discharge,

with some leading events of his life, since his landing at Montreal, of which he was ignorant. Much did they rejoice together; and, having expressed their joy at the footstool of Him to whom they owed the happy meeting, they separated to their chambers, for the refreshment of sleep—a blessing which, though it was denied to Douglas this night, was granted to the weary frame of Lefevre.

Lefevre rose early in the morning; and, calling first on his uncle, proceeded to a neighbouring inn, to take coach for his native town. Never did the journey appear so tedious; but tedious as it was to him, it terminated about the usual time. Unwilling as he was to prolong the time that kept him from his mother's embrace, he made his way in the first instance to his old friend Mr. Palmer, to beg him, once more, to prepare her mind for his unhoped arrival.

Mr. Palmer, ever ready to do a kindness, went immediately to Mrs. Lefevre, thinking as he went, how he might best

fulfil his commission. He knew, that since the departure of her son, she had lost much of her evenness of temper, and was occasionally subject to great prostration of spirits. It was in one of these fits of depression he found her.

'Mrs. Lefevre,' said he, 'shall I tell you some news?'

'News! no—I wish to hear no news.'

'Then I wo'n't tell you' he replied, with an air of indifference. 'Have you seen Dr. Mills, to-day?'

'Yes; he called this morning.—He tried to comfort me about Charles.—But ah! Mr. Palmer, I have no comfort but in God!'

'He is our *best* comfort, ma'am.'

'But didn't you talk of news Mr. Palmer?'

'Yes;—but you declined hearing it.'

'Ah! what is news to me—except it were about Charles—but I shall never hear of him again! Think Mr. Palmer of his being a private soldier. Poor child! I weep whenever I think of it.—Always

brought up so well—and taken such care of you know Mr. Palmer—he's dead with hardships before this!'

'What will you say, if I give you tidings of him?'

'Tidings of him!' she exclaimed, rousing herself and looking eagerly upon him. 'What is he dead then?—O tell me if he is! It wo'n't hurt me, indeed it wo'n't —It's better than the cruelty of suspense!'

'Be composed, my friend. Your son is alive!'

'Alive!—then he don't love his mother! O that's a cutting thought, Mr. Palmer!'

'You should not indulge it ma'am. I will venture to say he does love his mother most tenderly!'

She looked on him incredulously. 'Ah! Mr. Palmer, you're a good man as lives. But you are not a mother—you never had children.——If he loved his mother, why did he not write to her? See here, (taking a worn-out letter from her bosom, which she always carried there) this is the only letter I have had

from him. Why did he not answer mine?'

'Perhaps, ma'am, he may have left Canada before it arrived—he may be in expectation of seeing you.'

'Of seeing me! Ah! I shall never see his face! But you have heard from him then, Mr. Palmer? What does he say?'

'He says, ma'am, he hopes soon to be with you.'

'Does he!—dear child!—may I see the letter?'

'I have—I have received no letter,' replied he with great confusion, at this unexpected question.

'How! no letter! How did you hear then?' she continued, examining his looks.

Mr. Palmer was *at fault*. Without farther circumlocution, he was obliged to allude to the arrival of Lefevre, in the best terms his perplexity would allow.

Although Mrs. Lefevre had nullified the caution of her worthy friend, she was little qualified to endure the consequences. The several assurances—that her son was alive—that he still loved her—that he was

in England—that he was in the town, and not many yards from her—nearly over-powered her reason; and made her wild with joy. She glanced round the room as if he were already in it; and then proposed hastening to the spot where he was tarrying.

Mr. Palmer, however, succeeded in restraining her, and despatched a servant to request Lefevre's attendance. Painful were the few minutes, which elapsed between this message and the interview, to the affectionate mother. She endeavoured to listen to Mr. Palmer's composing conversation, but it had lost all its power; she tried all the chairs in the room, but not one of them could hold her. She hurried to the window to seek him—then she turned away and gazed at his picture, that hung on the wainscot—and then she paced the floor quickly, pressing her hands on her bosom, as if to suppress some hysterical sensations.

Soon Lefevre, entering the back way, made his appearance at the parlour door, and in an instant was folded in his mother's

arms. 'My son!—my son!' she cried, pressing him to her heart. Then she held him from her and fixed her eyes on his features, and then again as suddenly embraced him exclaiming—'It is he!—He is alive!—I have seen him!—I am not childless! Charles! Charles! My only Charles!'—She became insensible, and sank down on the sofa.

This event was favorable to both parties. Lefevre had time to compose himself, and his mother, when her perceptions returned, was calm. She looked with a tender smile upon her son, who was kneeling by her side, and kissing her hand.

'My mother!' said he, with answering tenderness.

She wept.

'Mother! my dearest mother!'

'Oh! Charles—my dearest Charles—How that voice goes to my heart!—How long it is since I have heard it!—It was always sweeter than music to your mother!'

'My beloved mother shall *always* hear it,' said he, weeping with her.

'Ah! you will never forsake her—will you?' said she, a painful recollection, changing her countenance.

'No—never!—nothing but death shall separate us; and that but for a short time!'

A smile was restored to the cheek, over which the tears were rolling—'Dear—affectionate child! I have sometimes been unjust to you.'

'Oh! my beloved mother, say not so! Do not distress me! It is I who have been unjust—undutiful. Say you have forgiven me?'

She could not reply. She embraced him afresh—mixed her tears with his—pressed countless kisses on his cheek and forehead—and, restoring him to himself, said—'Think, my dear, only of the past, as it shall strengthen our mutual love.'

Henceforth the past was forgotten, only as it had this desired tendency. Lefevre tarried some time with his mother, delighting and being delighted. He was edified by the society of Dr. Mills, while it pleased him, as his character reminded him, of the excellencies of his missionary

friend. To that distant friend he wrote a long and affectionate epistle. He visited the favourite walks of his Douglas; and often paused before the tomb of his youthful playmate Caroline. And when he returned to town, it was in company of his mother, who seemed to find in his presence, a charm for that heaviness of spirits, to which she felt herself subiect.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DURING Lefevre's absence from London, Douglas was busying his thoughts on what attentions might be most properly shown him, to reconcile his mind to his connexions, and to discover the joy his return had diffused.

Amongst other things, it occurred to him, that, as he knew Lefevre, for some time at least, would like to be accommodated with the Russells, he could easily put his old lodgings into a comfortable state, for his reception. With this impression he went to their worthy and mutual friends, and explained his wishes. For a few minutes he had to sympathize in the first transports of joy, created in their generous bosoms, on learning that Lefevre was in England, and that in a short time they were to see him again! Afterwards he found them delighted at his proposal; and so ready to execute it, that he with

some difficulty insisted on taking his share, in providing for the arrangements. Mrs. Russell became quite talkative with joy. 'There are his books you know Mr. Douglas—we have all of them—and they have never been touched—and as to the rest we can soon manage it. When does he come? It shall be as nice as a new pin before that time, be it when it will'—And then she ran on, telling in detail, what she would do—how she would do it—just as things arose to her mind. Douglas left his friends, satisfied every thing would be done, that could testify respect and love for his Lefevre.

In addition to this, Douglas thought, that much awkwardness of feeling might be spared his friend, by being introduced at once, to most of those acquaintance he would wish to preserve. He suggested such a meeting to him, and proposed that it should be under his roof; and so conducted as to be, at once, social and devotional. Lefevre cordially acquiesced in Douglas's desire; he named the Christmas day for its occurrence; and expressed a

hope, 'that it might be an occasion of benefit to some, and of proper acknowledgment to the superintending goodness of God.'

Lefevre had, however, to witness a painful scene, before this day of mutual rejoicing arrived. On reaching London, and the dwelling of his friend again, one of his earliest enquiries was after the companions of his folly. Douglas, who had interested himself in their course because they interested Lefevre, informed him pretty accurately of them. Two of them, by their continued excesses, had brought premature death upon themselves; and the rest were, either reduced to a state of nerveless insensibility, or, driven on by passions indulgence had made domineering, they had gone from worse to worse, till they were superlatively bad.

Much as Lefevre's heart ached at the statement, its pains were sensibly encreased, as Douglas replied to his interrogations concerning *Wilson.* The others he had found thoughtless, gay, and irreligious;

but Wilson he had drawn aside from the paths of peace and innocence.

Poor Wilson! He was now in a dying state. A habit of drinking had been too easily formed on his plastic temper; and it had gradually brought with it all its accursed and inseparable attendants. It had weaned him from his home—it had wasted his property—it had disqualified him for his duties—it had broken his spirits—it had subdued his piety—and it was now preying on his life!

Lefevre could make no reply to the distressing account; but merely said in a suppressed voice of deep feeling, 'I must go and see him!' and, arose from his seat to fulfil his intention. Douglas rose with him, and the friends went together.

The first glance on Wilson's present circumstances, affected Lefevre by contrast. He had formerly occupied good apartments, to which cleanliness and order gave a nameless charm; and Lefevre had, at first, been accustomed to find him, receiving and reflecting the affectionate smiles

of his wife and child, as the evenings passed happily away, in light employments, or domestic recreations. Now he saw him and his family driven, for a last refuge, to a wretched garret, low, dirty, and unfurnished; and even here, it was evident, the scourge of poverty was on them. A clean cloth lay in one corner of the place, as if to cover their scanty provisions. Two damaged chairs and a broken table, stood towards the centre of the room. Within the sooty chimneypiece lay a few coals, between half-a-dozen bricks; but at so much distance from each other, that the flame of some, in vain attempted to communicate itself to the remainder. By the side of the fire, on a stool, sat the little child, stretching out her chilled hands and feet, desirous of a warmth she could not obtain; while the smoke puffed out repeatedly by the wind, had given a sallow cast to her dejected, but healthy countenance.

The wife and mother rose at the entrance of the visitors to receive them, without salutation, without complaint. She stood like a picture of woe. Nothing

seemed to remind Lefevre of her, but a certain neatness of appearance, which, though it cannot be described, often serves alone to distinguish one female from others; but this very neatness sat on her shabby attire, like the spirit of departed comfort on existing misery, and seemed to say—'I have seen better days.'

On a worm-eaten press bedstead was Wilson himself. His eyes wandered without observation; his flesh had sunk from his features, and given them an awful prominency; and an unwholesome yellowness tinctured his skin. His liver was consumed, and his end was rapidly approaching!

'Ah!' thought Lefevre, as he moved towards the bed, 'I have done all this!' He spoke to the dying man. He was insensible.—He turned away with agitation to his afflicted wife, and enquired the state of his mind. Her reply was just what he dreaded to hear. 'Unhappy, sir,' said she—'very unhappy!'

'Is he penitent?'

'I trust he is, sir!'

'Has he hope?'

'Alas! no sir. Had he but hope in his death, the bitterness of death would be past to me!'

'*He must hope!*' cried Lefevre, losing the command of his grief for a moment. Then recovering himself a little, he enquired, whether he was likely to be sensible again; and, on learning that he was, and that it was most probable towards evening, he begged permission to attend him that night.

The friends walked home in silent reflection. Lefevre knew not how, either to conceal, or express his concern. Douglas remarked it, and said—'Poor Wilson! I have seen him many times; and, though he is without comfort, I would believe he is truly penitent.'

'Do you think so!' exclaimed Lefevre, with momentary satisfaction—'But he has *no hope!* Can there be real contrition where there is no hope—no faith?'

'He may,' replied Douglas, 'have hope enough to raise him above despair; and yet too little to produce *sensible* com-

fort—there may be faith enough to *rely* on the Saviour, but not enough for an *assurance* of his favor.'

'Ah! *may be!* but at best it is *doubtful.* O my dear friend, you cannot know what I suffer at this instant! You have never ruined a fellow creature! Poor Wilson! His temporal distress is nothing—but his *soul* Douglas!—Indeed, if he die without some evidence of his hope in the Redeemer, I shall never hold up my head in this world!'

Strong emotion scarcely allowed him to finish the sentence. He hastened to his chamber, to repent afresh of those transgressions, which had carried their influence beyond himself; and to pray ardently for the pardon and acceptance of his former companion, that his guilt might not rest on his conscience.

Early in the evening he renewed his visit, as he had proposed. Wilson was still insensible, and the hand of death was evidently upon him. Lefevre determined not to leave him; and prepared to remain with him the whole night, should he live

through it. Hour after hour elapsed, leaving him little to do, except to count the slow minutes on his watch, or to feel the dying pulse, which by turns throbbed—trembled—and stopped! Midnight came and went without any glimpse of reason; and the patient was waxing worse. Lefevre was greatly distressed; he feared that no opportunity would be afforded, to exchange even a word or a sign with him. About one o'clock, however, the heavy film on his eye dispersed—his senses were collected—he could see—he could speak. His eye caught Lefevre! He had no expectation of seeing him. He became confused. He made an effort to recover himself. His eye brightened, and still dwelt upon him. Lefevre could not endure it. He spoke to relieve his feelings.

'Wilson!'—said he, 'do you know me?'

'*Know you!* Oh Lefevre! ——' cried the dying man, with alarming agitation.

These words, associated with his own reflection, went, like a lancet, to the bottom of Lefevre's soul. Had he inclined to his

feelings, he would have fled from the pain of his presence; but his mind was now disciplined. He had a duty to discharge —he desired to lead him back to the fold whom he had led from it—and he cared not what he suffered, if he might but accomplish it.

'What is your state of mind?' he resumed.

'Dark—dark—*miserably dark!*' said he, shaking his head.

'Do you doubt the goodness of God?' said Lefevre.

'O, no! impossible!—impossible!—but to *me*—to *me*——' and his voice failed him.

He regained it. He pointed to his wife, who sat at the foot of the bed absorbed in woe—'See there!' said he, 'I have ruined her—my child—I have ruined my child!'

'Think not of *us!*' exclaimed the afflicted wife.

'They shall never want friends!' said Lefevre.

'Dear Lefevre!' said he, extending

his hand to him.—'Where's the child?' he continued—'Where's my Ann?'

He was told she was sleeping. He desired to see her. They took her from the corner of the room where she was reposing, and, without awakening her, bore her to her father. He passed his bony and faultering hand down her little fleshy arm. He motioned for her to be lowered to him. He endeavoured to lift his head a little, and pressed his livid lips on her half-opened and smiling mouth. The effort and emotion were too much for him—he fell back and fainted. The unconscious child was laid hastily on the foot of the bed, while they sought to revive him.

Lefevre felt that he had been diverted from the subject, which lay nearest his heart. He feared the life was now departing; and he shuddered to lose his friend, without some evidence of his return to God. 'O,' said he to himself, 'his guilt will be upon me!'

On the application of volatile salts, however, to the nostrils of Wilson, he once more revived, but it was without the power

of utterance. He tried to speak and could not! The attempt only convulsed the lifeless jaws. He looked on his wife and Lefevre, with indescribable anguish.

'O Wilson!'—cried Lefevre—'cannot you speak to us?—Make a sign—Are you not happy?'

He endeavoured to shake his head; but, having inclined it one way, he could not turn it in the opposite direction. They understood his awful, half-expressed *negative* and wept.

'Do you not' continued Lefevre, 'repent of your sins, and renounce them?—If you do, lift up your hand,' and his eye fell upon the nerveless hand, as though the sentence of life or death were within its power.

It arose!—An insupportable weight fell from Lefevre's heart.

'Are you,' he resumed, 'enabled to cast yourself, as a perishing, condemned sinner at the feet of the divine Saviour?'

He had lost the power to raise the hand; but he slowly raised both his arms, while the feeble hands hung dangling upon each other.

'Oh! Thank God!' cried the wife.

'Oh! Thank God!' cried Lefevre.

This burst of joyful gratitude over, their attention was fixed in sympathy with the sufferer. A few moments would now end his sufferings. The blood had retired from his clay-cold extremities. The light of his eye was quenched. His breath was short, spasmodical and rattling. Convulsions, like the fangs of death, writhed his whole body. An attack severer than the former came on It terminated in a deep groan. Lefevre thought it announced the departure of the soul — he sunk on his knees exclaiming—'Lord Jesus receive his spirit!'—He paused to listen for his breathing—nothing was heard? He held his watch glass over his mouth – its surface was not steamed! Awful was the moment! Awful was the stillness that succeeded! Neither Lefevre nor Mrs. Wilson dared to interrupt it, by word, or sob, or movement. You might have thought, that death had not only triumphed in one instance, but that his seal was set on every thing in this chamber of woe. The neglected taper was flickering

away its last light in the socket. The exhausted cinders on the hearth were, as the fire forsook them, crackling like the death-watch. The child lay at the feet of the exanimate body of its father, breathing so softly, that it seemed to respire not at all. The mother and Lefevre were so pale—so motionless, that you might have questioned, whether they had power to move, or to think. And the room itself, with its low arched ceiling, blackened by the smoke of numerous years, and containing only light enough to reveal the darkness, was much more like a sepulchre for the dead, than an abode for the living.

Mrs. Wilson was the first to show signs of life. She arose, and moving to the head of the bed, closed the eyelids of the dead body. This act of delicacy to the deceased stirred all her grief; she sunk on the bed, and, kissing the pallid forehead, wept aloud, without seeming to have power to arise. Lefevre did all that christian sympathy could suggest, to console her beneath the affliction. He tarried with her till break of day; and then, taking his leave, assured

her, that he would wholly relieve her from the painful duties connected with his funeral.

'Poor Wilson!' thought Lefevre as he went towards the residence of Douglas— 'Poor Wilson! thy sun is gone down at noon!—and behind a heavy, impenetrable cloud!—But I trust, by the grace of God, it shall arise, on the morning of the resurrection, bright with glory, and changeless as immortality!'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AFTER having obtained slight repose, Lefevre did what was immediately necessary for the remains of Wilson; and then went with Douglas, to call on the Russells.

Nothing could exceed the joy of these excellent persons in this interview. At the first sight of Lefevre Mrs. Russell ran forward to greet him, exclaiming—'Thanks be praised! Thanks be praised! here he is!'

'My son! my son!' said Mr. Russell, with a calmer, but as deep a joy, embracing him with open arms, as if he remembered his promise on last parting with him.

'O what a blessed moment is this,' continued Mrs. Russell, pressing his hand between hers, 'To see your face again! and to see you smile so sweetly as you used to do! It makes one's heart dance again! Ever since Mr. Douglas told us you were come, my food has done me no good, for the longing I had to see you!—Ha! my

dear, (turning to her husband) you're a famous man for dreams, and presentiments; you always said you thought you should see our dear Charles again, as we called him.'

'Yes, my dear,' observed Mr. Russell, passing his hand over his venerable locks, 'I did think so; and I rejoice as much in seeing him, as I should in seeing our dear child, though we hav'n't seen him these three years.'

This allusion moderated, without extinguishing the emotions of Mrs. Russell. They sat down, and conversed together most pleasantly for some time. Mrs. Russell, however, was the first to interrupt the discourse. She and Douglas had a secret between them; and she longed to witness the pleasure of Lefevre on divulging it. She sat silent a couple of minutes, busily pursing her lips and twirling her thumbs; and then, starting up, addressed him—'Have you no wish to see your old rooms Mr. Lefevre?'

'A very great one, ma'am,' replied Lefevre, 'if it is convenient to you.'

'O, perfectly convenient! They have scarcely been used since you left them. Follow me!'—and away she tript up stairs, leaving the three gentlemen to choose their own pace.

The minute thus stolen from ceremony, was given to the exercise of a lively and delicate affection. It gave Mrs. Russell opportunity to assure herself that all was arranged, as she would have it. Her truly womanly eye, offended instantly by the want of order and proportion, ran over the room. Every thing was in its place — the whole looked well. Yet, there was an unaccountable itching in her fingers, to give a last touch to all things. She stroked the plaits of the curtains— regulated the drop of the blinds to the light, and to each other—ran her hand along the surface of the bookshelves—shifted the desk and chair about half an inch—and hastening into the antichamber, passed her fingers over the counterpane as she went—and opened, finally, the linen drawer, to see that nothing there was rumpled. All this was done in a shorter time

than is required to tell it, and being done, Mrs. Russell took her stand in the middle of the room, waiting to mark, with glistening eyes, the first impression on Lefevre.

The impressions of Lefevre were those of joyful surprise. He expected to have found, that his books were sold to cover a debt he owed Mr. Russell, and thought that little in the room could remind him of what it *was*. On the contrary, it carried him back not only to former days, but to his *best* days; and was, at the same time, a quiet instance of the most respectful friendship. For a moment he reproached himself for neglecting the merits of such attachments, and then, exchanging a smile with Douglas, which dwelt on the joys that were past, he turned to smile with pleasure and gratitude on his revered and aged friends.

'And will you,' said he, 'receive me again? Have you forgotten all the trouble I foolishly gave you?'

'*Will we!*' replied Mrs. Russell. 'Do you doubt that we love you then?—To be sure we will receive you, with all our

hearts! *Forgotten the trouble!*—Yes, indeed we have! Mr. Russell and I never think of injuries. I remember, a person some time ago insulted me, and I hastily said I would never notice her again; but the next day happening to meet her, I nodded and spoke as usual; for I had forgotten all about it. — But there's one thing we don't forget. We don't forget how happy you once made us; nor shall never! So don't doubt about our willingness. If you are willing, you'll come; and if you come, you'll make the evening of life bright and sunny to us old folks, I assure you!'

'If I can promote your comfort, it will be a great addition to my own,' said Lefevre, bowing to the open-spirited Mrs. Russell, and her husband.

He went towards the table, and seated himself at the desk, turning over his old bible, and observing the marginal notes he had entered there.

'Ha!' exclaimed Mrs. Russell, 'that is quite like old times. He sits now just as he used to do, turning over his books. How often have I peeped upon him,

while he has been busied with his books, and said in my heart,—" Blessings on him! He'll make a shining character" —and so he will after all, depend upon it Mr. Douglas!'

'Not a *shining* character,' said Lefevre rising and kindly pressing her hand,—'But what is of infinitely more importance, a *useful* one.'

'Well, well,' said Mr. Russell with a playful smile, 'suppose we unite them—to *shine in order to be useful.* I think our blessed Lord has done so. To shine for the *sake* of shining, is contemptible vanity; but to desire to shine, that others may be benefitted by our light, is real piety.'

After Lefevre had inspected every thing, and warmly expressed his pleasure on the occasion, he turned upon his friends a happy and enquiring look,—'Pray,' said he, 'to whom am I obliged for all this delicate attention?'

'To nobody!—To those who think themselves obliged by doing any thing for you,' cried Mrs. Russell.

'To those, who think the most they

can do, but a trifling expression of their joy on Mr. Lefevre's return to the bosom of his friends!' said Mr. Douglas.

'To those, who have always looked on you with the tenderness of parental love, or the strength of fraternal friendship!' said Mr. Russell, as the tear moistened his eye.

Lefevre was affected deeply. He looked on them all. 'My father!—my mother! — my brother!' he exclaimed, 'such you have ever been to me!—O, I now feel I am at home. and that to this hour, I have been a wanderer!'

Blissful was the pause of silence that succeeded! Soon, however, it terminated. They shook hands and parted, with the expectation of meeting on the ensuing day.

The anticipated day arrived. The morning of it was given by Lefevre to still devotion; and by Mr. and Mrs. Douglas to busy preparations, that every thing might do honor to the occasion, and, at the required time, pass forward with order and quietude.

At length, the morning waned, and

the guests made their appearance in the drawing room. There were Mr. Lefevre, Mr. and Mrs. Russell, Mr. Banks, John Graham, Wallis, and four other young persons, with whom Lefevre had had some acquaintance; but whose names, as they have not been necessary to the former part of the history, need not now be mentioned. These Mr. Douglas had invited, because he hoped the opportunity would be highly profitable to them; and, if Wallis was of the number, it was with a similar hope; while he had an assurance, that the time was past, in which he was likely to influence Lefevre dangerously.

Lefevre received his friends with calm joy, and unaffected humility. The attention, however, which in the first instance, was so eagerly directed to him gave him some embarrassment; but from this he was speedily relieved, by the politeness of his host and hostess, who soon gave it other directions, and made their friend's situation easy to him.

Dinner was soon announced; and soon the company were seated around a

bounteous table; over which good taste, economy, and liberality presided. There was nothing confused or incongruous; one thing bore a relation to every other thing provided. Nothing was wanting, to tolerate the thought of niggardliness—nothing present, to extort the charge of profusion.

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas did the honours of the feast, in a manner the most simple, noiseless, and cheerful imaginable. There was no puff, no show, no violent intreaties; no inward uneasiness, lest the expense of one dish, or the rarity of another, should pass without valuation or applause. It was evident, that their pleasures were to arise, not from offerings to their vanity, but from the *sensible comfort* of their guests. They had kind words, and a smiling countenance for each; and, if their attentions could be supposed at all partial, it was in favor of those, on whom modesty had cast restraints. Every want was supplied before it was named or felt; and, such was the communication kept up between the eye of the mistress and those of the servants, that the variations of the table seemed to

go on by magic; and you were convinced, that the management was not *got up* for the day, but was the result of a uniformly well regulated household.

During the dinner John Graham sat next to Lefevre; and he took occasion to acknowledge his letter, and to inform him of its happy influence upon his mind. It appeared, that he had been exposed to some temptations to worldly amusements; and that he had lost much of his relish for the means of religion, though he had not neglected them, at the time the letter found him. To its arrival he referred, not only his establishment in the best purposes of his mind; but, acting on its directions, he expressed a modest hope, that he had enjoyed and comprehended religion, as he had done at no previous period of his life. Lefevre, who had so lately witnessed the sinister effects of his example, rejoiced exceedingly before God, on finding his admonitions had been efficacious to one so greatly beloved.

On the removal of the cloth, the healths went round, in which Lefevre was emi-

nently noticed. All were happy and communicative; and the conversation was incidental, familiar, and general. At length, Wallis and Banks, who happened to sit together, fell into a *tête-à-tête*. Between these two persons there could not well be a greater contrast. Mr. Banks was a linguist, awkward in his manners, and rather pedantic in his conversation; but of excellent character, and unprovokable temper. With Wallis the reader is well acquainted. Mr. Banks had in reply to his neighbour, presented some etymological criticism rather needlessly; and Wallis, who had a sharp sense of the ridiculous, with limited views of real worth, was induced to break a jest or two upon him. Many witty things were said on one side, and many grave ones on the other; till the one becoming more vivacious, and the other more earnest, the rest of the company paused to listen. Wallis had just given that arch turn to his features, which was to usher in a *bon mot*; and he was rather excited, than checked, by the eye of general observation.

'Ha!' he exclaimed triumphantly—'I suppose you remember the anecdote of that ridiculous *pedant*, who, on hearing the king of Prussia praised for his incomparable skill and dauntless bravery, turned coldly away and said—"After all, I imagine the king of Prussia cannot decline a verb in μι without making a blunder."'

Every eye turned on Mr. Banks. He was confused; his tongue was paralyzed by *mauvaise honte*. Mr. Douglas, not enduring that he should suffer a moment's pain on a day devoted to joy, took up the subject—'The disposition,' said he, looking on Wallis 'of which you complain is, I think, by no means peculiar to *men of letters*. All men have their favorite topics; and on these they commonly entertain enthusiastic, and extravagant opinions. Perhaps you recollect the account of the philosopher, who, in his rage for his darling doctrine of divisibility, maintained, that a particle of matter is *just as capable* of infinite divisibility, as the globe itself?'

'It seems,' said Lefevre, 'in some degree to arise, from the desire of saying

the utmost that can possibly be said, on a given theme. If I remember rightly, Bishop Hopkins is an example to the point. I think, in treating of "little sins,' he presses their enormity so far, as to end by insisting, that *little* sins are *greater* than *great* ones.'

'True!' continued Douglas, 'and I fear we must refer some of it to self-love, which teaches us to identify ourselves, with objects and pursuits in which we are particularly concerned, and do, perhaps, eminently excel. Must we not in a measure ascribe to this, those hyperbolical opinions often possessed, by the soldier of arms, by the advocate of law, and by the physician of medicine?'

'Aye, aye,' said Mr. Russell—'then it all comes to the old fable. If the city is to be repaired, the carpenter, the currier, and the mason, will all propose to do it; and each one recommends his *own* materials as the *best*.'

'Yes, sir,' resumed Douglas—'and that, not always from a mere idea of *gain*. Their immediate employ may have so mixed itself, with all their modes of thinking and

natural partialities, as to have brought them, to rest upon it a value disproportionate and unreal.'

'And since it appears, that *we* are liable to the very failing we detect elsewhere, should we not learn charity to others?' observed Mr. Russell.

'And,' said Lefevre, 'if such a disposition is natural to us, how desirable must it be to bring it over on the side of *religion*—then our very infirmities might promote its blessed interests.'

'Exactly so,' said Mr. Banks, again composed, 'and in that case, it would be *total* advantage, without risk. We cannot exaggerate on the merits of religion!'

'Very good,' said Douglas, with a smile. 'All our danger with religion is, on the side of *deficiency*. It has an importance—an excellence—a glory—above our words—above our thoughts! What would be extravagance elsewhere, is sobriety *here*.'

The conversation paused a moment; and then became general again. Lefevre introduced the case of Wilson to them. He described his death, and dwelt on those

particulars, which he thought calculated to benefit the younger part of the company. All were greatly affected, by the deep sympathy he exhibited in the deceased and surviving members of the little family; and a subscription was made for the funeral, which went very far to cover all the expence.

By this time the ladies had retired to the drawing room, and the gentlemen speedily sought them there. The day had closed. All without was dark, and cold, and damp; but all within was light, and warm, and gladsome. Once more united, the happy party ranged themselves along the sides of the room, in form of an oval; having, at one extremity, a brilliant fire, and at the other, a fine toned organ, each branch appearing the happier, for the presence of the other.

Before the tea entered, Mrs. Douglas was petitioned, from all quarters, for a lesson or two on the instrument. The petition was seconded by Mr. Douglas, to whom she had cast her eye; he attended her to the seat. She played some of Han-

del's finest pieces, supported by the voices of her spouse, and the other young men. Joy and harmony filled the place.

When the refreshments of tea had been handed and dismissed, the conversation was found chiefly in the hands of Mr. Russell and Lefevre. They were talking on the mystery of Providence, with marked seriousness. Lefevre made some allusion to his own 'awful visitation,' and attention was bent upon him. Hitherto, delicacy had forbidden any one to refer to events, that might stir painful recollections; but, now, it was evident, if Lefevre chose to lead to them, all were most ready to follow. Those who know how concern and sympathy in the auditor unlock the heart of the speaker, need not be informed, that Lefevre's was completely opened.

He became, indeed, the principal centre of attraction and pleasure, through most of the evening. He touched on the leading events, during his absence from home; directing each of them to those, who were likely to regard it as most interesting. To Wallis he talked of the manners,

habits, and amusements of the people in Canada, sometimes with humour, and always with truth. To Mr. Banks he spoke of books and learning, and the stupendous appearances of nature. To the females he presented tender pictures of the widows, and children he had known; and described the admirable character of the Missionary. And, whatever related more fully to the interest of religion, and his own spiritual experience, while it was heard by all, was particularly addressed to Douglas and Mr. Russell.

His emotion kindled as he went forward. All that he had suffered—all he had deserved to suffer—passed afresh before him. He felt the greatness of his deliverance, and was pressed on, by the weight of his obligations to his Redeemer. Sentence after sentence was encreasingly serious. He had the highest object before him. He sought not merely to gratify, but permanently to benefit, his young acquaintance. He had secured their attention, and he was resolved on improving it. He connected the most suitable moral re-

flections with all he had stated. He called in other incidents, indifferent to their humiliating tendency on himself, where they were likely to make a good and strong impression. Sin he exposed in its deformity —temptation he stript of its meretricious ornaments—the world he proved to be as empty as ostentatious — and he threw around religion those divine charms, which can neither be bestowed nor appreciated, but by him 'who has handled and tasted and felt of the good word of life.'

He rested. He was surprised to perceive, how his earnestness had carried him on. No one spoke. His young friends, to whom he had, in the end, directed himself, still looked on him. Mr. Russell and Douglas sat at his side, with countenances suffused with delight. Mrs. Russell had her eyes covered with her handkerchief; and his mother had retired to a distance to weep! He was confused. 'Forgive me,' said he, 'if I have said too much. I feared my past example might have injured you, and I was desirous of repairing the mis-

chief. What I have said is the fruit, not of books, but my *own experience* If possible, I would make others wise by that experience. I would not any one should suffer what I have suffered, even with the certainty of surviving it; and, alas! where I have been preserved, thousands have perished.'

He ceased; and his spirit seemed depressed beneath the sense of his past conduct. The flow of conversation was interrupted, and no one was prepared to restore it. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas exchanged looks. She moved to the organ; and, accompanied by the deep tones of the instrument, sang with a sweet and tender voice, the following verses:—

The Welcome.

WELCOME, welcome, weary pilgrim,
To the friends who love you best;
Now, no more your thoughts shall wander;
Now your way-worn feet shall rest;
Weary pilgrim!
Welcome to your native home!

As mothers mourn the child departing,
So did we your loss deplore;
As mothers greet the child returning,
So we joy to grieve no more;
Weary pilgrim!
Welcome to your native home!

Fairer suns, and softer climates
May in other lands be found;
But the sweet, domestic virtues
Thrive alone on British ground;
Weary pilgrim!
Welcome to your native home!

Here are eyes, that speak a meaning,
Which the tongue can never tell;
Here are hearts, that share the feelings,
Which within your bosom swell;
Weary pilgrim!
Welcome to your native home!

Live we, then, in blissful union,
Children of eternal day;
Till, upborne from earth to heaven,
Waiting angels whispering say—
'Weary pilgrims!
Welcome to your endless home!'

These stanzas varied and perpetuated the strong feeling of the company. The delicate compliment they offered to Lefevre,

surprised and overpowered him. He sat on the sofa, with one hand veiling the tears that would fall; and with the other, pressed to the bosom of his too happy mother. The rest of the party partook of high delight. They encored the verses; and begged; that they might be separately repeated, that all might have the opportunity of joining in a welcome, so accordant to their hearts. The request so respectful to Lefevre, was instantly complied with; and all, excepting the subject of them and his mother, united to sing the verses with that enthusiasm of feeling, which music and friendship can well inspire.

Time flies quickly with the happy. The evening was now yielding to night; and, as the general sentiment was truly devotional, Douglas was anxious to have it preserved. He proposed, therefore, that the pleasures of the day should be closed, by a regular acknowledgment to Him, who was the fount of all their felicity. All were acquiescence; and it devolved on Mr. Russell to become the organ of their devotion. The excellent and venerable man took his

seat in the midst of the room, and read the exquisite Parable of the Prodigal with such depth of feeling, as made every expression and sentiment his own; and, such was its appropriateness to the occasion, that you might have supposed our Lord had at first conceived the pathetic story, from precisely such a scene in domestic life.

They knelt to pray. Mr. Russell was never so much in his element, as in this exercise; and now he rose above himself. His heart was already melted, and he had only to pour it out before the mercy seat. This he did with the utmost freedom; and yet, so true were his emotions to the surrounding worshippers, that he uttered nothing but what was adapted to them, and for which the previous intercourse had prepared them. He was particular without being trivial—and copious without needless repetition. Every petition seemed to give greater warmth and elevation to its successor; till he arose, from penitential confession and earthly necessity, to dwell in profound adoration on the riches of the divine mercy, power and intelligence. It

was truly sublime! All wept, and some found it impossible wholly to suppress their sobs. The distance between earth and heaven seemed annihilated. The saintly man appeared, like Stephen, to be looking steadfastly on the objects with which he communed. He might, all revered and patriarchal as he was, have been mistaken for Jacob at Bethel, with the invisible world open to his sight, and ascending and descending angels all ministering to him!

The service terminated, as in this world the most delightful service must; but it left on the worshippers a glow of exalted seriousness and heavenly joy. Even Wallis, the least promising of the company, was affected to a degree, of which he had been thought incapable. The mind was too highly raised for conversation and, having accepted slight refreshments, almost in silence, they began to separate.

'O' said Mrs. Lefevre as they were taking farewell, 'how short this day has been!'

'It has, ma'am,' replied Douglas; 'but let us remember, its departure brings

us nearer to an eternal day of celestial joy!'

'Oh! Mr. Lefevre,' cried Mrs. Russell, as she wrung his hand, 'see how happy you can make us!'

'Ah!' continued Mr. Russell, looking with a countenance open and smiling as the sun,—'and if in the world above (lifting his hand) we have any recollection, as I think we shall, of the past, I shall, even in heaven, *never forget this day!*—What say you, sir?' turning to Wallis who was next him.

'I confess, sir,' said he, 'it has been a happy evening, and I should like to have such another.'

'Right, right,' said Mr. Russell. 'Depend upon it Mr. Wallis—to be happy we must be *good:* and to be good we must be *godly.*'

Mrs. Russell hurried back from the door which they had reached, to get Lefevre's reassurance that he would occupy his lodgings on the morrow, and then finally disappeared.

The room, at length, was left by all

the visitors, except Lefevre and his mother, who for that night tarried with Mr. and Mrs. Douglas. They sat a few minutes, quietly ruminating on the enjoyments of the day; and hoping the impressions it had made, might not evaporate. The striking of the clock reminded Lefevre of the time he had consecrated to piety and friendship, and he withdrew for some time to his closet.

The transition was very acceptable to him. At this moment, he was more disposed to carry on his communion with his heart and his Maker, than with his dearest earthly connexions. His joy too, throughout had been softened by shades of tender melancholy; and, there was something in his chamber, that sorted with it most pleasantly. All seemed so still after the inseparable bustle of company. All appeared so pensive, after the brilliancy and harmony of the lower room. The moon-light shone mistily through the unshuttered window; and left its faint image on the floor. He put his taper in a distant corner; and placed himself where he might gaze on

the celestial luminary. He was attached to it, not only because it kindled within him those delicious sentiments, of which it has been the parent from the foundation of the world; it was now become the visible bond between him and his friends, in the new world; it was associated with a thousand recollections, some of them painful—others pleasurable, but all of them dear to his heart. It had often been, as now, the witness and assistant of his devotions. In secret silence of the mind he unbosomed himself to its Creator and his own Redeemer; while the unregarded tears strayed down his cheeks, flowing alike from deep repentance—rapturous joy—and the ardor of unfeigned devotedness.

Before he sought again the society of his friends, he made the following minute in his diary:—

'Christmas day, Dec. 25.—— This day my friends have met together, to express their joy and gratitude on my return to them. It has been indeed a happy day! Life, I believe, has few such to bestow. May it appear to have been as use-

ful as happy! Several of my former acquaintance, and even Wallis, were invited by Mr Douglas with this hope; and certainly, I never saw such evident seriousness upon them! O that it may remain and increase! The Spirit of the Lord is not straitened. He who saved me can save all! and I now pant to become the instrument of saving, not only those whom I have injured, but all to whom I can possibly extend my influence.

'Father of Mercies! on the verge of this day of joy, I would seal afresh my consecration of myself to Thee! To Thee I solemnly surrender my whole nature, body, soul, and spirit; and vow, in thy strength, that they shall be thine for ever! Graciously accept and confirm my vows, through thy dear Son, for I am feebleness and unworthiness themselves! Teach me to bow to thy will as the supreme of wisdom—to trust in thy might as my best security—to rejoice in thy favor as my highest happiness—and to seek thy honor as the noblest end of my existence. Pour out upon me the influences of thy Holy Spirit!

May I unite the prudence of the serpent, with the meekness of the dove—the simplicity of the child, with the firmness of the man. Make me, barren and worthless as I have been, verdant as the fir-tree—fruitful as the olive—strong as the cedar: and, after having flourished to thy praise on earth, may the hand of death only transplant me to flourish for ever, in thy blessed presence, with more abundant fruitfulness, and to fuller perfection! Amen.'

Postscript ———— 1819. Lefevre took up his proposed residence with Mr. and Mrs. Russell; and his mother meditates a removal to London. His friends obtained for him a situation to his wishes; and, although its rewards are not equal to those he formerly received, he finds enough for use, and something to spare. His time is divided amongst the duties of his employ, his own improvement, and the exercise of friendship and benevolence; and thus apportioned, it finds him contented, and leaves him happy; subject only to the interruptions, which the best—the happiest must

experience in this probationary state. We leave him, therefore, with hope amounting to satisfaction; but still with this conviction alive on our remembrance, '*that he only who endureth to the end shall be saved.*'

Meanwhile, in furnishing the last sentence to this period of Lefevre's history, it may be proper to state, that not one line would have ever met the public eye, had it not have been for the exhilirating hope—*that they who read his failings will not only deplore, but* AVOID *them; and that they who read his excellencies will not only admire, but* STRIVE TO IMITATE *them.*

FINIS.

H. TEAPE, PRINTER, TOWER-HILL.

